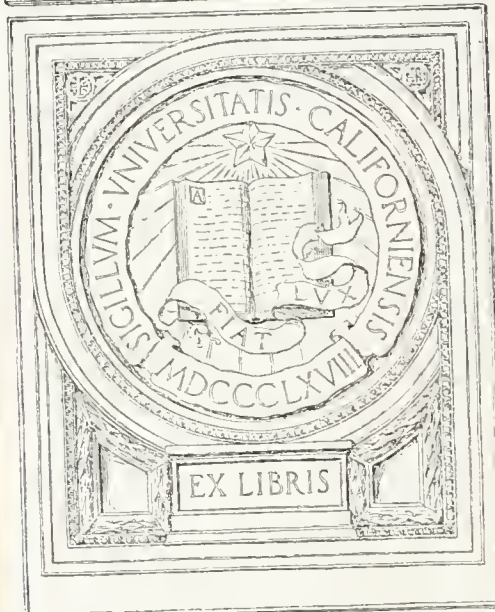
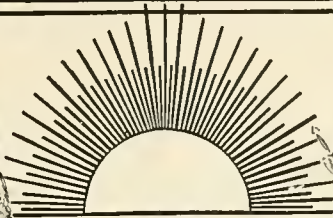


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AUSTRALIA

By EDWIN CARTON BOOTH, F.R.C.I.

ILLUSTRATED

FROM DRAWINGS BY

*SKINNER PROUT, N. CHEVALIER,
O. BRIERLY,*

ETC. ETC.

VIRTUE AND CO.,
CITY ROAD,
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AUSTRALIA

BY EDWIN CARTON BOOTH, F.R.C.I.

ILLUSTRATED WITH
DRAWINGS BY SKINNER PROUT, N. CHEVALIER, Etc.

IN TWO VOLUMES
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CHAPTER I.

THE CENTENARY OF AUSTRALIA.—CAPTAIN COOK.—TASMAN.—DAMPIER.—CAPE HOWE.—LA PEROUSE.—CONVICT COLONISATION.—GROWTH OF THE COLONIES.—OTHER ENGLANDS.—SUBDIVISION OF AUSTRALIA.—BOTANY BAY.—PORT JACKSON.—TASMANIA.—VICTORIA.—SOUTH AUSTRALIA.—WESTERN AUSTRALIA.—QUEENSLAND.

ON the 19th of April, 1770, Captain Cook saw, running away to the north and west of the course he had been steering for some days, a long range of wooded hills. There existed no record of such a land, and the grand old sailor knew that he gazed upon a new world. With the islands of the sea he was well acquainted. His last departure had been taken from New Zealand; he had expected to fall in with Tasmania, but from his position on the day named he knew that a fresh discovery had been made, and the spirit of the explorer was strong within him.

Long before Cook's time, in 1600, and half a century afterwards, travellers had visited the western and northern shores of Australia, and Anthony Van Diemen had left a souvenir of his home love in the name he gave to the island. Forty or fifty years later, in 1688, the buccaneering Dampier had knocked about for some little time up and down the mangrove-lined shores in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Carpentaria. To him, however, was not given the eyes to see the beauty and advantages of the Island Continent. The inhabitants he looked upon "as the most miserable wretches in the universe, having neither house nor garment, altogether degraded, without religion or government." Dampier paid a second visit to the country; but his last impressions were no more favourable than the first,

and, but for the honour of having "discovered the barrenest spot on the face of the globe," he thought he might just as well have stayed away.

Cook was happier, either in his point of approach or in the intelligence he brought to bear upon the discovery. "The sea-shore," he said, "was white and sandy; but the country within green and woody. It had a very pleasing appearance, was of moderate height, diversified by hills and valleys, ridges and plains." He shortened sail, and remained for the night. Pursuing his researches the next day, he called the highest point of the land Cape Howe; and from this very Cape Howe there now runs the line of division between the oldest and the richest of the Australian colonies—New South Wales and Victoria. Just one hundred years after Cook named the point, a party of Victorian surveyors commenced the work of defining and marking the exact bearing and position of this imaginary line. Having satisfied himself as to the richness and beauty of the land, Cook bore away north, went into Botany Bay, missing, as was not difficult, the entrance into the now famous and far more important Port Jackson, and, after pursuing his journey as far as Booby Island, sailed away from Australia.

The story of Australian expedition during the next few years is an interesting one, but would not find its proper place here. It would include a good deal of French endeavour in the way of discovery, coupled with a record of such barbarity and cruelty as will for ever cast a shadow over the memory of men whose labours should have endeared them to their fellows. The romance and mystery that attended the voyage and disappearance of *La Pérouse* would form part of such a history; but none of these things bear upon the story of Australia itself, or the circumstances and people of to-day.

When the intelligence of Cook's discoveries reached England, the mother-country was in sore straits with reference to the ill-behaved portion of her population. With the end of the American War came a want of prison-houses. The American colonies had been found very convenient as points of discharge for the surplus convict population; but they had ceased to answer the purpose. Fighting had demoralised the people, and crime, when discovered, was, in those days, punished with a heavy hand. There was no lack of crime, and detection was common enough—so common, indeed, that the difficulty was what to do with the offenders after they had been convicted. New places of transportation were in request, and Captain Cook's report of what he had seen in New Holland, impressed the official mind with the importance of the discovery. Hence the shipment of a cargo of convicts from England to Botany Bay in the May of 1787; and thus was commenced

the colonisation of Australasia. How it has grown from that day to this will best be told as the various colonies come under notice in their proper order. From the shores of Port Jackson there has spread to the north, and the south, and west a cluster of colonies, in the history and position of each of which Britons, of whatever nationality, have a peculiar and enduring interest. From out of every English town and hamlet, from every Scottish hill-side and valley, from the whole length and breadth of Ireland, and from the quiet and out-of-the-way corners of Wales, there have gone forth families, and members of families, in hundreds and thousands, who are now engaged in building up "other Englands" in that great south land, of which Captain Cook told his wondrous story "a hundred years ago." Cities have risen up since then, and towns and villages there are in plenty. All along the coast traversed by Cook flourishing communities exist and thrive. The valleys that run along the river-banks and into the mountains, the vast plains and the rich coast land, even the sub-basaltic depths of a pre-historic period, are all peopled and all prospering. The rivers have been traced up to their sources, the interior penetrated and partly settled, innumerable flocks and herds are feeding on its pastures, all the arts and industries of European life are cultivated and improved upon, and the country increases in interest and in riches every day.

Australia is by no means the "one and undivided" mass too often understood by those who speak of it. From north to south the vast island measures 3000 miles, and from east to west it stretches nearly as far, having the tropic of Capricorn running nearly through its centre, holding away north thence half way to the equator. The Island Continent's southernmost point is two degrees farther south than the Cape sighted by Captain Cook, though that may be taken as the average east of the country. It is not to be wondered at, that when this vast area became even sparsely inhabited a diversity of feeling and of interest on the part of the people led to a division of its lands. Within twenty years of the landing of the first batch of convicts at Port Jackson, the country had become too strait for the people. With reference to this first landing there is a somewhat strange error prevalent. So long as transportation to the Australian colonies continued it was common to say of a convict sentenced to banishment that "he had been sent to Botany Bay." It singularly enough happens, and the record is pretty clear on the subject, that no convict or party of convicts ever landed on the shores of Botany Bay. That Captain Cook failed to discover the narrow gate-like opening to Port Jackson has already been told. That he anchored in Botany

Bay is equally certain; and so accurately did he lay down its bearings and position, that Captain Arthur Phillips, who commanded the convict expedition of 1787, and who had been appointed governor of the projected settlement, after a weary voyage of eight months over waters then comparatively unknown, had no difficulty in finding it, and there he cast anchor. He left it however, without landing any portion of his convict cargo.

Captain Cook appears to have been as singularly happy as accurate in his designation of places, their character and position. Botany Bay is a remarkable instance of this. By following his directions, the first seekers for the harbour found it without difficulty. When they had entered, they must have been struck by the felicity with which it had been named, for the name is a perfect indication of the character of the Bay. Nearly circular in form, its waters lap lazily upon a shore that shelves step by step, and foot by foot, into a perfect wilderness of flowers. The high trees are festooned and the lower lying bushes covered with them. They vie in colour and form with the richest parterres of the most favoured places in the world. The ground is carpeted with them, whilst the trunks of the trees and the few stones that lie about are covered and concealed by blossoms.

Though thus beautiful, Botany Bay was by no means desirable as a place of settlement, convict or otherwise. To this day not more than a dozen houses, if so many, have been erected upon its shores, and these are chiefly devoted to the entertainment of parties of pleasure from Sydney and elsewhere. Visitors to Sydney, no matter how brief their residence, make a point of visiting Botany Bay. The country lying between it and the city is not of an interesting character in itself, but the perpetual plenty of flowers renders the road a pleasant one. When once the streets are left behind, the road lies through a heavy, level, sandy country; so heavy and sandy indeed, that locomotion becomes a difficulty. Visitors are seldom in a hurry, however; and it is a common amusement with them to gather flowers, fill their vehicle with them until it is full to overflowing, and then cast them away, only to repeat the process over and over again. There is a wonderful house at Botany Bay. It is a substantial, well-built, and roomy residence, and looks as though designed for the country house of one of Sydney's superior citizens. Now it serves the purposes of an hotel, and there are few hotels in the world that fulfil their destiny so perfectly. The grounds surrounding the house are marvels of flower-gardening. In addition to the native flora, all the most beautiful species of tropical and sub-tropical countries,

as well as of those of more temperate climes, have been cultivated to a degree of perfection impossible in places less favourable to their development. With what profusion they grow may be judged from the fact, that a large vase, fully two feet in diameter, standing in the entrance hall of the house, is not unfrequently, not simply filled, but crammed with roses and fuchsias of exceeding beauty. The outer walls are surrounded by an aviary, in which are confined birds "radiant in plumage and prodigal of song," and varying in size from the silk-white peacock of India to the tiniest humming-bird of the Australian Bush. In several of the compartments the song-birds of Britain are found in hundreds: indeed, so plentiful have these become, that the surrounding woods are filled with them. A plank road, or jetty, some hundreds of yards in length, runs down the low-lying swampy ground leading from the house to the Bay. This ground is rich in water-flags and lilies; a myriad creepers hiding the surface of the water from the traveller, whose way lies towards the silvery sands of the bathing-place. In one corner of the low-lying ground there is a menagerie, and the elephants, lions, and tigers inhabiting it seem to have become imbued with the stillness of the quiet woods. Lambs, in an ordinary state of nature, appear positively savage compared with the lions collected on the shores of Botany Bay. Had the Lotus-eaters anchored there, instead of English convicts, they would have been content with such an abiding-place for ever.

After anchoring in the Bay, in the very height of the Australian summer of 1788, Captain Phillips sent an exploring party ashore. The timber, although pleasant enough to look at, was of an inferior quality and unfit for building purposes. Of water they could find none, for that burning January sun had dried up the tributary creeks, and the springs were empty. Wood and water are among the first necessities of settlers in a new country, and a removal was at once decided upon. After a little careful searching, the fortress-like entrance to Port Jackson was discovered. The sheer upright rocks—now called the North and South Heads—could not long remain unnoticed; and it is easy to conceive the feelings with which the voyagers exchanged the rocking motion caused by the "league-long roller" of the Pacific for the still waters of the land-locked and beautiful Port Jackson. Every mile—almost every hundred yards—disclosed new beauties. The precipitous sides of the bay were garnished with flowering shrubs. Running in and out of the harbour itself, and on either side, were others, and, if possible, more beautiful bays, each having at its entrance an island of surpassing loveliness. Nowhere does there exist a more beautiful country than

that bounding Port Jackson, and here the travellers determined to make their resting-place. The after-progress of the colony will be told by-and-by.

The first offshoot of the convictism of the "mother colony"—New South Wales is still so called—settled down first in Norfolk Island and then in Tasmania. An attempt at forming such a settlement had been made on the shores of Port Phillip; but this, as well as a subsequent one, was unsuccessful. An experience, similar to that encountered at Botany Bay, was the result of the experiment; and Port Phillip, in 1805, was spoken of in terms not unlike those used by Dampier, with reference to the opposite coast, two hundred years before. It remained for free and independent men to develop the resources of Victoria.

The failure at Port Phillip resulted in the settlement of Van Diemen's Land. In 1804 Hobart Town was founded by a community of convicts from Sydney. The record of the first few years of Tasmanian history contains as much of cruelty and crime as does the history of any country in the world. What with the outbreak of convicts, and the conduct of both hired and free towards each other and the aborigines of the country, the island became, in the language of one who knew the people and the times, "a perfect hell." Up to the year 1824 Tasmania remained a dependency of New South Wales, and the Government was described as a "semi-military tyranny." Under the new constitution of the colony various reforms were instituted, but the leaven of the old wickedness remained for many years afterwards. Now it would be difficult to find a more pleasant abiding-place than Tasmania. Its progress has not been so rapid as that of the other colonies; but for beauty of scenery, comfort of living, and a perfect homelike state of existence, it equals, if it does not surpass them all. It is rich in all that nature can do for a country, and is already looked upon by the residents of India and the Australian colonies as one of the most come-at-able and comfortable of the pleasant places of the world.

Simultaneously with the inauguration of a new form of government in Tasmania, Australia Felix—the Port Phillip of the after-time and the Victoria of to-day—was discovered. The Australias had not been left altogether to the convicts deported by the English Government, or the keepers placed over them. Numbers of both of these classes had managed to convey intelligence to their friends in the old country of the good things that awaited them in the new land, and a large increase of population was the result. By the year 1830, men, together with their flocks and herds, had so increased and multiplied, that

some country in which to depasture the latter became an absolute necessity. From New South Wales exploring parties were sent away to the west, and the discovery of Victoria Felix was the result. The rich plains of the Murray opened up a new source of wealth, and the more adventurous of the squatters of New South Wales passed over the Blue Mountains and settled down in the new land. Whilst this migration overland was taking place, the Tasmanians had not been idle; one family, at least, had crossed the straits from the island, and settled on the mainland. There is little doubt but the first actual settlement in what is now known as the colony of Victoria was founded by the Henty family, for when the first explorers from the east penetrated to the south coast, they found them already established and prospering. The first organised attempt at colonising Victoria was not made till the year 1835, when two parties of adventurers from Tasmania entered upon the work. The honour of being the pioneer has always been a disputed point, Mr. John Pascoe Fawkner and Mr. Batman both claiming it. Both are dead now; but on the river-bank, for which they disputed five-and-thirty years ago, there stands one of the most prosperous and substantial cities in the world. The field that Fawkner ploughed has been sold in small portions at fabulous prices, and is now the site of a handsome street, whilst the hill upon which Batman settled, and which was always called by his name, has been swept away in order to make approaches to a railway station, the line from which pierces the wilderness of twenty years ago.

To enter upon the new land and to possess it was not left, however, entirely either to the people of New South Wales or Tasmania. The news of the discoveries to the west of the old convict settlement had reached England. In those days emigration used to be discussed with an earnestness little dreamed of now. Then as now, philanthropists and speculators engaged in the work, but the social obstacles of the time stood less in their way; and they had more enthusiasm. They were fond of making experiments, too; and to one of these is due the foundation of the colony of South Australia. The first experiment, made in 1836, was intended to develop a plan of colonisation that had perhaps as little of wisdom in it as was possible. The world has been often told of the scheme of Mr. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, and of its failure. The circumstances that attended that failure were disastrous in the extreme; nor was it until the Crown asserted its rights, and private speculation was diverted into proper channels, that the real prosperity of South Australia commenced. The story of that prosperity will be found in

its proper place; it dates from 1845, or thereabouts, and is not the least interesting of colonial histories.

Before either Adelaide or Victoria had been settled, however, a country farther north had been formally taken possession of on behalf of the English Government. As early as 1822 attention was called to the importance of Western Australia. It derived an additional value in the eyes of the English Government from the fact of the French having expressed a desire to try their hands at colonisation on its lands. In the year 1829 no less than twenty-five ships arrived at Swan River—the name had been given to it by a Dutch navigator more than a century before—with emigrants and stock suitable for settlers. In the year following the population was still further increased; and the year 1831 opened upon Western Australia with a population of about 2,000 white men. The circumstances of the early settlers were by no means of a pleasant character. The same fatality that attended the first attempts at settlement in New South Wales and Port Phillip followed the steps of those who attempted to settle in Western Australia. They landed on a barren part of the coast, and the general arrangements of the colony appear to have been of the worst possible character. The parliamentary emigration papers on the subject disclose an amount of evil doing, in connection with the administration, scarcely credible in our day.

British pluck and perseverance, however, dragged the pioneers of the west through their misfortunes. The error committed in the selection of a site for the first settlement was rectified, and the town of Perth, having Freemantle for its port, fixed upon as the capital of the colony. The progress made, however, was very small, and the accounts received in England were not of a character likely to tempt a large emigration.

Save in exceptional cases, whenever business is dull and times are bad in a colony, the depression is attributed to a want of population. Acting upon this idea, the people of Western Australia, in 1849, petitioned the Home Government to allow them the luxury of convictism that Tasmania had thrown up with loathing and disgust, and from the taint of which the eastern colonies of the Continent had long before freed themselves. With what heartiness the Government complied with the request of the colonists, may be judged from the fact that, in 1866, out of a population of less than 22,000, nearly one-half were either convicts, or convicts who had been emancipated. Thanks to the determined stand taken by the Victorians, their number will never be added to, and Western Australia is now left to the action of healthy impulses and institutions. The country is rich in natural resources, and the

climate good and favourable to Europeans. Nowhere can there be found a finer race of men, physically or morally, than the white natives of Western Australia. Already, in the first generation, they have distinguished themselves in the arduous work of exploring and opening up new country. Western Australia differs from all the other colonies in its form of government. The Governor, assisted by an Executive Council and a Legislative Council, composed of ten members, all nominated by the Crown, administer the laws as in the old time in the other colonies.

Whilst the south and west were thus early settled, the far north and north-east of the continent continued comparatively unknown. Leichardt had explored a good deal of the coast-land, and at intervals portions of the interior were traversed and described. By degrees it became sufficiently known to tempt men of means to embark in grazing, for which its widespread pasture lands were well adapted. Towards the end of 1868 gold was discovered at Canoona on the River Fitzroy. Immediately on the discovery being made public, a perfect mania for the far north set in. Each of the colonies, New Zealand included, contributed its quota towards the general stampede. At every port of the Australian shores ships were laid on in dozens. The Victorian diggings were deserted. Men crowded into Melbourne and Sydney in thousands every day; and fast as ships were laid on, they were filled with a living freight. The madness lasted for less than a month; but, though its duration was so short, it was severe in its character. The gold of Canoona was exhausted by the first thousand diggers; and within three weeks of the landing of the first ship-load of men, 40,000 unemployed people were congregated at Rockhampton, a landing-place on the River Fitzroy, about forty miles above the port, Keppel Bay. It was perhaps the maddest "rush" ever indulged in by gold-diggers. A perfect fleet of vessels covered the hitherto unheard-of waters of Port Curtis and Keppel Bay. Within a month every ship had sailed away, carrying deluded diggers in thousands. The Government stepped in and provided passages for those whose means had been exhausted; and it was some time before the older settlements of Australia recovered from the shock sustained by them through the exodus to the Canoona gold-fields.

Although the first search for a gold-field resulted in failure, its effect was the establishment of a colony, and a prosperous one. Of the thousands who had sought the tropical gold-field, there were some who had eyes to see the natural riches of the land, and who determined to make the best of a bad bargain by remaining behind. The majority, of course, returned to the places

from whence they came. The squatter who selected the ground upon which the town of Rockhampton now stands as a handy landing-place for the country he had taken up as a "station," must have possessed keen judgment, and a positive power of utilising natural resources. His selection met with the approval of not only the disappointed diggers, but of those likewise who remained behind, and who, taught by experience, might fairly claim to rank as good judges. It is sufficient for the purposes of this introduction to say that the desolate river-bank of 1858 is in 1873 the site of a flourishing and pleasant town; and that for hundreds of miles around it, prosperous settlements are to be met with in every direction. It is worthy of note, also, that the gold by which the "Queenslanders" were first tempted, and by the want of which they were so lamentably disappointed, has since then formed one of the many valuable products of the colony.

In the December of 1859, just a year and a half after the first influx of strangers into its borders, Queensland, that had before been a name only—its territory and revenue being claimed by the Government of New South Wales—was declared an independent colony. In its short existence of fourteen years, it has had many ups and downs. Now it is a prosperous country; then it was a vast wilderness. Many things tended towards permanently fixing the position the country has attained, but enough has been written to introduce Queensland, the youngest of the family, as one of the great Australian group of colonies.

Having thus endeavoured to sketch the beginnings of the Australian colonies, it simply remains to state some of the good results of their existence; and then proceed to show the elements and experiences that have conduced and led towards their present prosperity. New South Wales, then, the "Mother Colony," claims nearly one-third of the million and a half of people who inhabit the Australian continent. It has a revenue of £2,100,732, and it exports £7,000,000 worth of produce. Victoria has exported of gold alone nearly £150,000,000 since 1851. Its population numbers 700,000; thirty years ago it was perhaps 700. There are a thousand churches and chapels in Victoria, and nearly as many buildings—good, bad, and indifferent—used as school-houses. Ten millions of sheep graze upon its natural grasses, and its horses and cattle are ranked among the famous breeds of the world. Besides its gold, it exports largely of wool, and wheat, and preserved meats. South Australia has an equally good account to give of itself, and so of all the other colonies.

Of course this prosperity has not been attained without the expenditure

of much time, money, labour, pluck, and perseverance. The Australian colonists have had a beautiful country in which to work, and their workings have developed its beauties to an extent that home-abiding folk have little conception of. Hand in hand and step by step with the explorer and the farmer the artist has travelled. All that is interesting in Australian scenery and in the ways of Australian life have been gathered together, and all that could be learned from personal knowledge and thoughtful care will accompany these pictures of that "other England" in the south, in which all Britons are so deeply interested.

CHAPTER II.

VICTORIA.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT.—OLD WHALING STATIONS.—THE WILD WHITE MAN.—A ONE-SIDED BARGAIN.—TRADING WITH THE BLACKS.—A NEW COLONY.—NEWSPAPERS AND PUBLIC-HOUSES.—A GOVERNOR FOR PORT PHILLIP.—A PLEASANT PASTORAL.—DESIRE FOR AN INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE.—OVER-CROWDING OF MELBOURNE.—CHEAP FOOD AND NO LABOUR.—GOVERNMENT MISMANAGEMENT.—A PANIC.—IMPROVEMENT.

Wonderful as has been the progress of Australia as a whole, within the last hundred years, the increase in riches, population, and general importance of some of the colonies of which it is composed is more wonderful still. In illustrating this view of the subject, the colony of Victoria presents itself with perfect naturalness and propriety as an example. It has been shown how the crowded graziers of New South Wales and of Tasmania sought for themselves fresh pastures, the one across the steep ridges of the Blue Mountains, and the other, after passing the boundary line of water that lies between Van Diemen's Land and the southern shores of Australia. The story of their settlement is an interesting one. Of the first settlement, that of the Hentys, near the present site of the flourishing town of Portland, little is actually known. Of their plan of operation and the methods they adopted for laying it out we can tell nothing. For some years before 1830 the Tasmanians had been characterised by their enterprise, and for the development of novel industries. They had for a long time carried on whalo fishing with profitable results. It is more than probable that the Hentys had in one of their whaling expeditions sighted Cape Nelson, and selected it as a good position

for the purpose of boiling down the blubber of the whales they captured. So eager had the Tasmanians become in the pursuit of the whaling industry, that it is not improbable far-seeing men began to look beyond the boundary of the island for favourable locations. It was by no means unusual for whaling parties to select out-of-the-way places and there prepare their oil, out of the sight of their fellows following the same trade. On the coast of Tasmania especially many of these old whaling stations exist. They are generally situate on the shores of some little land-locked bay, and are easily known by the remains of old huts, and the skeletons of whales lying about in straggling heaps, bleached with the storms and sunshine of Australian summers and winters. Some of the whaling stations have for their surroundings many objects of singular beauty and interest. The sketch of one of these at Wine-Glass Bay gives a most vivid and life-like impression of a place and position that would naturally attract the attention of men who desired to carry out their operations without attracting attention from others. When a good whaling ground had been discovered, the discoverers were not anxious to invite strangers to partake of their treasures, hence the selection of secluded spots in which to carry on the necessary work of boiling-down. Whether Portland was selected by the Hentys for some such reason as this, or, as is more likely, the character of the country induced them to make a permanent settlement there, is not told. However this may be, there is no doubt but that long before any systematic work of exploratory or settlement had taken place, the little colony on the shores of Portland Bay was already flourishing. Cattle and sheep had been landed, and had time to increase and multiply before the "Overlanders" from the Sydney side, or Fawkner and Batman from Tasmania, tried the first experiment of bartering tomahawks and blankets for land with the natives of Australia Felix.

There is one incident of earlier days still that may as well be referred to here. It must be recognised as a part of the history of the colony of Victoria, although it has exercised no influence upon the course of events or the people. Reference has already been made to the unsuccessful attempts to form a convict settlement on the shores of Port Phillip by the authorities at Sydney. One of these, the last, was made in 1806. The precise point of landing of the survey party is not known. Wherever it may have been, there was nothing in the neighbourhood to tempt them to stay. Had they sailed a few miles farther up the bay, or ventured a short distance inland, Victoria would have had one other difficulty to contend with when the time for its occupation by free

men arrived. Luckily the convict difficulty was saved to the settlers, for the party sailed away to Tasmania. One man of the expedition of 1806 remained behind, and thirty years afterwards he was discovered with the blacks. He had learned their language, married into one of their tribes, and having been mistaken for the apotheosis of a great chief, was treated with unusual consideration and regard. When discovered, he had forgotten his native language, and was scarcely distinguishable from the natives with whom he had cast in his lot. Whatever intelligence he may have originally possessed returned to him soon after his meeting with white men, by whom he was found exceedingly useful in treating with the natives. These appear to have got the worst of the bargain, notwithstanding they had a friendly arbiter in all their transactions in the person of Buckley, the "wild white man." Buckley was not pleased with the way in which his black friends were treated, and he soon left Australia Felix for Tasmania, where he died in 1856. At the time of his transportation—the particular offence for which he was punished has not been stated—Buckley was a soldier, and it is a somewhat singular coincidence that among the officers sent to take charge of the new settlement at Port Philip was Captain Lensdale, under whom Buckley had previously served. The convict-soldier of course recognised the officer before the officer identified the soldier, this, notwithstanding that his appearance was somewhat singular. Buckley was a finely-built and well-made man. When he first landed in Australia he stood six feet nine inches in height. No doubt his physical powers and appearance had a good deal to do with the estimation in which he was held by the natives. After his arrival in Tasmania a free pardon was obtained for him from the Home Government. After his settlement in Hobart Town he became a constable, and proved a faithful public servant. Forgetting his old love across the water, he married a white woman. At the time of his death—he was then seventy-six years old—and for some years before, he had a pension of £40 per annum from the Victorian, and £12 from the Tasmanian Governments. Thus the first white man of Victoria ended his days in tolerable comfort.

The bargain made by the newcomers with the natives was, in many respects, a singular one. Both Batman and Fawcner were sufficiently shrewd to know that they had no legal claim to the land of which they had possessed themselves, so they forthwith made a bargain with the Blacks. This bargain had no effect in strengthening their legal claim, still they found it convenient to make, and it served their purposes. Jagága, Coolooluk, and Bungoree, and two others, were the contracting parties on behalf of the

natives. These chiefs, for a "valuable consideration," consisting of a bundle of blankets, some tomahawks, a lot of gaily coloured pocket-handkerchiefs, and a bag of flour—transferred to the white settlers sufficient land to form an English county. Within a few months of this transaction being concluded fully fifty persons had settled down on the banks of the River Yarra-Yarra, and the foundations of a new colony were firmly fixed. Within two years from the landing of Fawkner and Batman, Melbourne assumed very important proportions. Its inhabitants were reckoned at fifteen hundred, and these had erected for their abiding-places upwards of two hundred and fifty houses. A good many houses were licensed for the sale of spirits. The spirits sold at them were exceedingly bad, the prices charged very high, and fortunes were made out of the trade. Mr. Fawkner started a public-house and a newspaper; out of the first he made money, and for his method of conducting the second he was persecuted. This, however, was no new experience to him. He had undergone a similar one in Tasmania; and, indeed, in those days a man must have been very far lost to a sense of shame and decency if his public sayings did not subject him to persecution and ill-favour. To say that the affairs of the Government were administered in a dishonest and tyrannical spirit is to use very mild language indeed. When the words used were compared with the deeds referred to, it is no wonder the outspoken Fawkner fell out of favour with the authorities. Gradually, however, matters mended, and by 1839 so important had the new settlement become, that the authorities at Sydney appointed a governor for the district. Mr. Charles J. Latrobe was the first Governor of Port Phillip, and he continued to hold the position till 1854. These ten years or so of the history of the colony read almost like an idyllic pastoral, too idyllic, indeed, for the time was all too short for its thorough enjoyment. In Melbourne itself there were many ups and downs; for as until now, speculators and non-producers gathered together therein. By their lives and actions they brought disaster not only upon themselves, but upon those who were honourably and honestly labouring for a living. How well those who had sought their fortunes in the up-country districts had worked for the fortunes they had sought, may be judged from the fact that in 1840 five hundred bales of wool were shipped from Melbourne. Land was sold by the Government officials to the extent of £200,000, and Port Phillip began to wonder why all this income should be absorbed by a district that gave nothing in return save incompetent Government officials. From this time may be dated the desire for separation from New South Wales and the formation of an independent colony, that cul-

minated, almost simultaneously with the discovery of the gold-fields, in 1851.

The intervening years were, on the whole, pleasant and prosperous enough. From 1841 to 1844 the country enjoyed an almost uninterrupted run of good luck, and the people were well-to-do and contented. The country was opened up in every direction. Wherever there was a crossing place on a river, there was a township formed, and to these townships the working men of the up-country districts, the shepherds and cooks, stock-riders and "handy men," of the stations, would repair once a year, for the purpose of getting rid of their twelve months' savings as fast as possible. A curious anomaly arose in the state of society in the colony about this time. In all new communities there seems to be a mysterious influence at work drawing the people together to the large towns, there to starve sometimes, leaving the up-country to suffer for want of the labour, by the misapplication of which the towns are pauperised. So it was with Melbourne at the time referred to. The natural riches of the country had so increased that the necessaries of life were obtainable for the merest trifle. Beef, mutton, and bread could be bought for a penny and three-halfpence per pound, yet dire distress existed in Melbourne. Up country the wages were low, but then the whole, or nearly the whole, could have been saved. In Melbourne labour was not only wretchedly paid, but difficult, and in many instances impossible, to obtain. Of course this state of things reacted upon such of the institutions of the country as had been the occasion of the want and loss. The machinery of government had been looked upon as a simple and effective means for raising money. The proper disbursement of it was a matter not deemed worthy of consideration. The law of retaliation appears to have asserted itself with peculiar force and precision at this juncture, for the treasury became empty, and the payment of the salaries of the government officials stopped. The same thing has occurred since, more than once, but from very different causes. The temporary disturbance appears to have had little effect in some quarters, for at a time when the funds were exhausted, when the government banking account had been stopped, and there was no possible means of recruiting the finances of the Executive, a gentleman was appointed treasurer and his salary fixed at a high figure. Then again a false system of trading had been adopted, men entered into speculations, squatting and mercantile, with means too small for their requirements. On the security of station property large advances were easily obtained, and proportionately large rates of interest charged therefor. This, coupled with the land specu-

lations in Melbourne, had the effect of producing a panic, from the disasters consequent upon which the colony did not recover for a very long time.

The natural resources of the country were, however, too great to allow these circumstances to depress it for long. By the beginning of 1847, so entirely were the colonists convinced of the good things in store for them, that requests were made to the Home Government for increased emigration. Wages rose, and all the employments attendant upon extensive building operations and a generally flourishing community easily obtainable. Just about this time, it will be remembered, great distress existed in the United Kingdom, and Port Phillip proved a comfortable refuge for hundreds who would otherwise have starved at home. The colonists, taught wisdom by the crash that followed the mad speculations of a few years before, settled down, home comforts became plentiful, and the people content. To this day the last years of the "forties" are looked back upon with regret by many old Victorians. "Those," they say, "were the real golden days;" and so they were, if comfort and content could make a golden and a happy time.

Whilst social life had thus improved, politics were moving in the right groove also. In 1849 the great object of the colonists was accomplished, and by imperial decree the district of Port Phillip became the colony of Victoria. It was not until 1851, on the 1st of July, that full effect was given to the constitution, and from that time a new era in the history of the colony may be dated. This, on other accounts than that of its independence merely, for gold was discovered, and the quiet contentment of the pastoral days exchanged for the excitement involved in growing rich without thought, trouble, or preparation. Before entering upon this new phase of life, it will be found interesting to test the progress of the colony as indicated in its increased wealth. It has been shown with what small beginning the colonists commenced life. Victoria was barely sixteen years old when its population was estimated at 77,000. Fully one-third of the entire people resided in Melbourne or its neighbourhood. The stock of horses had increased to nearly 22,000 in number, 400,000 cattle were depastured on its lands, upon the natural grasses of which nearly 7,000,000 sheep also grazed. In 1850 these sheep yielded 18,091,207 lbs. of wool, and 4,500 tons of tallow, and 1,000 tons of salted beef were exported. The 77,000 Victorians had imported goods to the value of £1,056,457, and exported £1,422,909 worth of property realised on the uncultivated lands, and the revenue had risen to almost £400,000. When it is remembered that the whole of this realised property was the result of pastoral pursuits alone, there is little to wonder at in the

content of the people or the regret with which some of them for so long looked back upon the "old days" before the gold. The after-history of Victoria is one of the most wonderful in the world, but it scarcely surpasses in real interest the growth and prosperity of the early times.

For many years anterior to the days of which we have to speak, vague rumours of gold having been discovered in New South Wales and in Victoria were common. In the very early times small specimens of gold in quartz were shown as curiosities in the shops of Sydney, and displayed as pieces of "queer stuff" by shepherds who had picked them up whilst following their flocks. One of these—he was a convict, and had been assigned, as was the fashion of the time, to a squatter up country—on one of his journeys into Sydney displayed a piece of water-worn and pure gold, which he said he had found on his master's Run. The term "Run" in those days was a wide one, and usually meant some twenty or thirty miles of river frontage, with "back country" extending perhaps double that distance. The unfortunate gold-finder was ordered to point out the spot from which he had obtained the precious piece of metal. He failed to do so, at any rate to the satisfaction of the authorities, and a gold watch having been stolen about that time, it was at once concluded that its cases had been melted down and reproduced in shape of a nugget. Convicts had scant courtesy dealt out to them in the old days, and the gold-finding shepherd was rewarded for his "discovery" with one hundred and fifty lashes. A few years later a gentleman who "discovered" gold, after others had found it, received a grant of £10,000 from the Sydney Government, and his claims for further emolument have been urged, and not altogether unsuccessfully, several times since.

After the whipping of the supposed watch-stealer, several shepherds—one in particular, a Scotchman—brought numerous pieces of gold into Sydney. Made wise by the experience of the first discoverer, they turned their nuggets into money with as little ceremony as possible. Thus gold discovery progressed slowly. In 1839 Count Strzelecki found gold in the Australian Alps. He pursued his search, and announced to the authorities his belief in the existence of gold in large quantities. He gave also the practical grounds upon which he had based this belief. He, however, refrained from making his discovery known on purely public grounds. The authorities represented to him the difficulties that would arise in dealing with the convict population should the fact of the existence of gold be made known, and he, with a self-restraint and good feeling that did him the highest honour, declined publishing the knowledge of which he had become possessed. This self-obtained

honour included the only profit he ever realised by his discovery. The deductions drawn by Sir Roderick Murchison, on purely scientific grounds, as to the existence of gold on the continent of Australia, are sufficiently well known. The mistake made by the same gentleman as to the decreasing riches of auriferous quartz veins as the lode increases in depth, is every day receiving verification in the experiences of nearly every quartz miner in Victoria and New South Wales.

The first result of these discoveries and predictions occurred just as Victoria was anticipating a greater amount of quiet prosperity than she had hitherto enjoyed. Her new constitution was an accomplished fact—she had the application of her own revenue in her own hands. Men were investing their money in land and houses, in stations, farms, and manufactories; hundreds were writing by every ship asking their friends in the old country to join them in partaking of the good things that had fallen to their lot. Money had been accumulating slowly but surely, and every one was rich, or in a fair way of growing rich, in all those things that constitute material happiness and prosperity. In the neighbourhood of Melbourne and Geelong, and in many of the small townships settled in the crossing-places of the various rivers, farms and clearings were springing up and being improved every day. New varieties of crops were being introduced and with profitable results. In the suburbs of Melbourne this was peculiarly the case. On the banks of the Yarra-Yarra and the Plenty, round about by what is now the pleasantest abiding-place near Melbourne—Heidelberg—homesteads and well-kept farms gave promise of future riches. These promises have been fully reclaimed, but after a different fashion to the one anticipated. The merchants of Melbourne extended their operations, and the wisdom of the course they pursued was amply testified to by the mansions that appeared on all the more eligible sites near the city. Shopkeepers and publicans became discontented with the weather-board and slab buildings in which they had hitherto carried on the business of their lives, and erected handsome shops and houses, some of them aspiring to the dignity of plate-glass and polished mahogany. The most tangible and satisfactory proof of the solid nature of the prosperity with which the colony was at this time blessed, was to be seen, however, in the improved condition of the working classes. Employments had so multiplied and wages so risen that every working man could save something towards laying the foundation of a fortune. In hundreds of instances the first fruits of this improved state of things were invested in the purchase of land by working men. Upon these

allotments dwellings were erected, and homes made secure. A team of bullocks or pair of horses soon followed, whilst cows and pigs were commonly found among the belongings of the wages-earning classes. The squatters, although burdened with heavy charges in the shape of payments for agencies, interest on advances, &c., were tolerably contented. Cattle and sheep multiplied faster than markets could be found for them it is true, and money was not plentiful, yet there was a certain quiet comfort about their occupations and lives that went very far to make amends for these and other drawbacks.

CHAPTER III.

VICTORIA (*continued*).

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD.—SELLING OFF.—THE RE-DISCOVERY.—DAISY HILL.—BALAARAT.—MOUNT ALEXANDER.—THE MAD CHRISTMAS.—SAILOR-DIGGERS.—UNDESIRABLE COLONISTS.—ARRIVAL OF CHINESE.—RECKLESS TRADING.—CONFUSION.—LEARNING WISDOM.—AN UNWISE GOVERNMENT.—THE POLICE.—THE GOLD-LICENCE FEE.—UNLUCKY DIGGERS.—POLITICAL AGITATORS.—THE BALAARAT RIOTS.

THE nations of Europe were not more disconcerted at the turn of events in consequence of the desire of the Spanish people to take to themselves a king in the July of 1870, than were the quiet and contented Victorians by the discovery of gold in New South Wales in the May of 1851. Ten years before gold had been found in the Plenty Ranges, about twenty miles from Melbourne, but from some cause or other the workings had never been attended to, and the memory of Messrs. Sharp and Anderson, two of the early settlers from Tasmania, who had worked the gold for some time, was almost forgotten. The settlers from the Sydney side, who for the most part had settled down among the rivers and creeks lying between the Goulburn and the Ovens, had naturally a much more vivid remembrance of the many reported gold discoveries with which they had been disturbed in the old days before their migrations westward. They, for the most part, turned a deaf ear to the tale of gold brought from the Bathurst they knew so well. The Tasmanians were always of a more excitable and go-ahead character than the people of Sydney, and the news of the gold aroused those of them who had settled in Victoria, at once. The news of the discovery of gold in New South Wales

was received in Melbourne simultaneously with the accounts of the influence it had exercised upon the inhabitants of Sydney. That city had been literally depopulated, and the same misfortune soon threatened Melbourne. Property that men had acquired with the design of holding it for ever, was thrown into the market and disposed of for whatever price it would bring. Money sufficient to take the gold-seekers to the adjoining colony, was all that hundreds of men cared for. Horses and houses, bullocks and belongings of every description, all the little household treasures that had been gathered together with so much of care and anxiety, were looked upon as naught when compared with the great good anticipated from a visit to the gold-fields. Nothing beyond the means of getting there was cared for. Many a man who sought to dispossess himself of his little house and holding and who failed therein, deeply to his chagrin and disappointment, was within six months pleased enough at the miscarriage of his plan. Whilst thousands denuded themselves of their property and rushed away, there were others who by the very extent of their holdings were constrained to stay. These, together with the others who had failed to realise sufficient to carry them away, formed a community sufficiently large and holding interests sufficiently important to make it worth their while to do the best they could under the altered state of things. There is something about the air of Melbourne with its bright skies and beautiful bay, that induces a promptness of thought and action that peculiarly characterised the men of Melbourne, at any rate, such of them as remained in 1851. A public meeting was called in that glorious mid-winter May, the long-forgotten story of gold found in the Yarra told over again, money subscribed, a reward offered for the re-discovery, and within a week the reward was claimed. From that day to this Victoria has been one of the greatest gold-producing countries in the world.

It must have been pleasant work prospecting for gold on the banks and in the valleys of the River Yarra. There is always shade to be found there, and great plenty of water. The trees and shrubs are very beautiful, the land is rich, and the whole district is now highly esteemed for qualities the early gold-seekers gave it little credit for. The Yarra, however, was not to be the field of the greatest of the gold workings. Large parties of prospectors started off west, and gold in the Pyrennees, in the Loddon, near the Avoca, on Daisy Hill, and at Balaarat, at Mount Alexander, at Bendigo, and at a hundred other places, was reported within a quarter of a year. In August the Crown proclaimed its right to a royalty on the gold obtained, and a right royal royalty it has proved.

Perhaps the first real gold rush in Victoria was made to Daisy Hill, but the great business of gold digging did not commence until the discovery of Balaarat. This occurred in September. On the diggings hitherto opened the earnings of the miners had only been moderate, but at Balaarat they were marvellous. The first results of Buninyong were, however, eclipsed by those of Forest Creek. These diggings—the Mount Alexander diggings they were called—were discovered in October, 1851, and by the middle of November, it was estimated, and the estimate was a low one, that 67,000 ounces of gold had been obtained in Victoria. The cases of individual success at Forest Creek were neither few nor far between, and on the 27th September over 10,000 ounces of gold were sent down by escort. Whilst the riches of Forest Creek were thus being brought to light, prospecting parties were pushing farther a-field. The gigantic granite masses lying between Castlemaine and Sandhurst were passed over, and within ten days Bendigo was crowded with diggings, and Forest Creek almost deserted. From this time forward “new rushes” were of almost daily occurrence. Ground that had been deserted at Balaarat and Forest Creek was returned to, and riches obtained in far greater profusion than the original prospectors had ever dreamed of. By the end of the year fully 250,000 ounces of gold had been obtained in Victoria; and the Christmas of 1851 was in Melbourne, and on the gold-fields township, one of the maddest seasons the world has ever seen. Riches ran riot, and drove the possessors thereof mad. To relate a tithe of the excesses committed would fill a book a thousand times larger than the theme deserves. Up to this time men were so few that there was little fear of want being the result of the reckless rush for gold. Ordinary employments were abandoned, but that simply resulted in inconvenience to people who in consequence had to wait upon themselves, instead of being waited on by others. In many cases that fact included a discipline of a character likely to prove beneficial rather than otherwise. Employers finding their workmen leaving them day by day, had no resource left but to follow to the diggings. One of the most peculiar features of this result of the opening of the gold-fields, occurred in connection with the ships trading to the port. It was of course impossible to keep the news away from the sailors, and to restrain men who had “signed articles” for forty shillings per month from rushing off to a spot less than a hundred miles away, where they could gain as many pounds a day as they could earn on board ship in a year, was simply impossible. The law was powerless, for the guardians of the peace had joined in the general stampede, and gone away in hundreds to the diggings. Masters of vessels, finding their utter

powerlessness in the matter, adopted a very sensible plan of making the best of things. They entered into an alliance with their officers and men, moored their ships as safely as possible, left one man in charge, and started for the gold regions in a body. A good many of this class of adventurers were exceedingly fortunate. The bargain made by the masters was faithfully carried out so far as seeking for and dividing the gold went. The return to the ship was a different matter. The captain was bound to go back, but in the great majority of instances the men remained behind, having parted from their old commanders in perfect friendliness, both being richer and more contented than when they started.

Soon as sufficient time for the news to reach England and for the return voyage to be made had passed, the darker lines of the picture of the gold-fields became apparent. Before this, crime had done much in this respect. From Tasmania, and Sydney, and New Zealand, "old hands"—pardoned or escaped convicts—had brought with them their influence for evil; but with the influx from England, all the evils of incapacity and unfitness were added to the other drawbacks suffered by Victoria. Notwithstanding the immense quantities of gold obtained in 1851—2—3 and 4, it may be fairly questioned whether in any community in the world there ever existed more of intense suffering, unbridled wickedness, and positive want, than in Victoria at the time referred to. To look at the thousands of people who in those years crowded Melbourne, and that most miserable adjunct of Melbourne, Canvas Town, induced the belief that sheer and absolute unfitness for a useful life in the colonies, added to the possession of means sufficient to bring them from home, had been deemed the only qualification requisite to make a fortunate gold-digger. With the vast majority of the newcomers, the idea of settlement in the country was never thought of. A voyage in a ship, a rapid run round a strange country, some huge pieces of gold picked up anyhow and anywhere, then home again rich and happy, was the carefully-elaborated programme of colonial life laid down by hundreds, who within a short year or so lay down to die in some out-of-the-way gully, or on some mountain range, without a word of kindness to cheer, or the hand of man to help them. Those whom this fate overtook were among the happiest and the best off of the unfit ones. Hundreds of others—women, mostly, and children, but men were not wanting in the ranks—descended to depths lower than death, and endured sufferings compared to which the pain of dying and of passing away, no matter how unhappily, must have been positive pleasure. The distress and crime in the gold-fields being more widely spread, was not so easily seen,

but it existed, nevertheless. Fortunately, comparatively few women found their way to the gold-fields in the early days. As a rule, those who did so were well qualified to encounter the hardships and difficulties of the life, but their experiences were by no means pleasant ones. In 1854, Chinese, who had for many years past been employed on some of the out-of-the-way stations of New South Wales as cooks and shepherds, began to arrive in large numbers. Like the Europeans who had preceded them, they testified by their conduct to the oneness of the influence that had brought them to Victoria. After a single night's rest in Melbourne—sometimes not even that—they betook themselves to the gold-fields, and within a very short time every diggings in the colony had felt their influence. How this influence worked, and the varying fortunes of the Chinese, will all be told in its proper place. In the meantime, reckless trading had brought the commerce of the colony to a state of absolute bankruptcy. Failures were matters of every-day occurrence. From August to December of that year it was difficult for any man to judge of his own or his neighbour's solvency. Added to this, the mode of administering the laws on the gold-fields plunged portions of the country into open rebellion. It was not to be expected but that the discovery of gold would disorganise society. The changes in the positions of people were of so strange a character, the hitherto comparatively compactly packed communities had been so scattered and so strangely added to, that confusion and misunderstanding were inevitable, if not natural, results. Every one felt the change; and, as a rule, its influences were for good. At first trades and professions were disturbed, and in some cases the pursuit of them changed entirely. In many instances considerable disorganisation took place, but the recovery was almost as prompt as the panic. The quiet, easy-going shop-keeper soon learnt how to hold his own against the adventurous spirits who entered into competition with him. Lawyers and doctors easily accommodated themselves to the changed state of things; labourers saw the advantage that would accrue to themselves at once, and were the first to enter into the profits consequent on the new order of society. The squatters—most unchanging of conservatives!—gave themselves up to the stream of prosperity at once, and accepted their retrieval from a state of debt and difficulty to one of riches and independence with an elasticity that did them credit. The old advance from agents, bearing its old, old rate of interest, was superseded by a balance at the bankers that must have been very pleasing to men who, a short twelve months before, had found all their own means gone, as they feared, for ever, and the “station” that represented their property becoming

charged with a debt that seemed to grow even more rapidly than the seasons passed away. All sorts and conditions of men learned wisdom from the changing experiences of the time, save those who had the government of the people in their hands. They, it is true, appreciated the good brought by the change just as keenly as the veriest shopkeeper, but they failed to recognise the duty of rendering a return for the prosperity by which they were so unexpectedly surrounded. All the rights they cherished and cultivated, the duties they ignored and treated with contempt. One of the earliest acts of the Government after the discovery of gold, was to levy a licence-fee of thirty shillings per month upon all those who chose to search for gold. Notwithstanding the increase of revenue thus secured, the expensiveness of a permanently enlarged staff absorbed the money quite as rapidly as it was collected. Immediately upon the want of income being felt, methods of increasing it were sought for. The genius of the time was equal to the emergency, and the ruling powers decided upon raising the gold-digging fee from thirty to sixty shillings per month. Wiser counsels happily prevailed, for by this time the terrible chances of failure that attend gold mining began to be felt, and the sixty shilling suggestion was never acted upon. The zeal with which the collection of the thirty shilling gold licence was proceeded with, made up at once for all accruing deficiencies. Every young man, having the requisite qualifications of incompetence and a letter of introduction, was straightway encased in a suit of blue and silver, furnished with sword and pistol, mounted upon a horse, and forthwith constituted a trooper. As a practical foil to the shortcomings of the mounted men—most of whom were exceedingly decent fellows—such of the old ticket-of-leave holders from New South Wales and Tasmania as were too lazy to work, and too cowardly to steal, were enrolled as foot-policemen—"traps" they were called by the diggers, and the name was by no means unsuitable to them. Horse and foot alike, they were despatched in hundreds on the one errand, "digger-hunting." To the hunters this was one of the most inspiring of sports. Like the modern *battue* and pigeon-match, the odds were all on one side, but the fun was none the less thoroughly enjoyed on that account. Although the advantages of the affair were partial in their influence and operations, opinions were divided on the subject; and it is scarce to be wondered at, that the hunted digger became dissatisfied in disposition and unpleasant in his conduct. The "lucky digger," the man with a golden hole, cared very little about the thirty shilling fee he was called upon to pay every month for the privilege of sinking holes upon the "waste lands of the

Crown." As an inducement to him to continue in his good behaviour, he was told that the money was expended in protecting him, not only in his digging privileges, but in his every-day life. This, however, he soon found to be a fiction, and so began to think of protecting himself.

There was at this time a larger body of men, however, to whom the thirty shilling fee was a grievous tax. There were in Victoria, in 1853—4, thousands who wandered wearily from rush to rush, from digging to digging, from Buninyong to Forest Creek, thence to the Bendigo, away over to the Avoca and the Goulburn, up to the Ovens, back again by way of Korong and Kingower; who traced and travelled all the gullies and valleys that lie between the Loddon and the Avoca rivers, pierced the passes of the Tuagara country, crossed the rugged "Bay of Biscay," who buried themselves in the deep gulches of Jim Crow; who sank, and delved and dug in all these places, but never got gold. Neighbours, and friends, and acquaintances might grow rich, expend their riches, and grow richer than ever again, but to the men spoken of, fortune never came. If they obtained a claim dead on the "lead," the gold was sure to take a turn and enrich those who were supposed to be less fortunately placed. The floods by which others were advantaged, tended to impoverish them by swamping their claims, carrying away their wash-dirt, or afflicting them with rheumatism. If two such men took up adjoining claims, both would in all probability turn out worthless, and a monster nugget be found by some stray digger who from sheer wantonness knocked down the party-wall. Week after week, and month after month, thousands of such men grew poorer in pocket, broken in health, and soured in temper, but Fortune always passed them by.

In very many instances the cause of the failure was to be found in the men themselves. Of the thousands who rushed from England to the gold-diggings in 1852, a large proportion were as utterly unfit for the ways of life on the gold-fields as it was possible for man to be. The idle and the dissolute took first place in this army of incapables. Then came the weak, the sickly, and the inexperienced. These fared very badly, as did the speculative, the dreamy, and the fanciful. Added to these all, were the downright unfortunate and unlucky. Gold-digging is of all pursuits in the world the most risky. This, of course, only refers to the individual miner. To the properly organised and equipped body of adventurers, gold-mining—as distinguished from gold-digging—is just as safe as any other trading speculation, requiring only, in common with all others, special knowledge and experience. The chances of success are a thousand to one against the digger;

and it is only the marvellous prizes every now and then discovered that tempt men to leave more settled employments for the life of a gold-seeker. There is, to be sure, the happy sense of perfect freedom, of independence, and the novelty of the state of life, to compensate for the uncertainty of gain; and these things have always possessed sufficient influence to keep the army of diggers well supplied with recruits.

From the earliest times of the gold-licence fee, it had been no unusual thing on the diggings for men to be so impoverished as to be forced to offer for sale their licence for the purpose of purchasing a loaf of bread. Men in hundreds went to Bendigo in the beginning of 1853, deeply impressed with a sense of certainty of getting rich rapidly. Many of these had been at the previously-opened gold-fields of Balaarat and Mount Alexander, and had seen fortunes amassed by persons possessing no more digging skill or knowledge than themselves. Others had landed in Melbourne with just sufficient money to carry them to the diggings and purchase a licence. Armed with this document—looked upon as a claim to secure gold-getting by many—the “new-chum” diggers spread themselves over the flats and up and down the gullies of Bendigo, and sunk holes in the most unlikely places they could find. To sink a hole three, or six, or ten, or, perhaps, in some instances, twenty feet, and at the bottom discover the hidden treasure, included the whole philosophy and practice of thousands, in those early days. “Drift” or “bed-rock,” slate or sandstone, granite or basalt, they knew nothing of, and cared less. Misfortune and loss were the only possible results. To this sickness—sometimes a heart-sickness, that killed slowly, but surely—was often added. When to these the prickings of hunger were joined, the worthless licence paper was gladly parted with. Then ensued a chase by the mounted troopers, a night spent chained to a log, followed by a fortnight’s “hard work” for the special benefit and comfort of the camp officials. Thus Government and Government routine became in the minds of thousands of decent, hard-working men other names for injustice and tyranny.

Among the other useless things attracted to the colony by its gold, political agitators were not wanting. Their transplantation to a southern clime had not tended to lessen the mischievous propensities of this class of men, and the actual evils of the time were eagerly seized hold of by them and turned to their own purposes. As a rule, these men had been unsuccessful at the diggings. Their failure was, however, generally attributable to sheer idleness; and they were, of course, the first to cry out against the iniquity of the Government. The wrongs committed were sufficiently real and oppres-

sive to give them an opportunity of talking instead of working. That they took advantage of the state of things can be readily understood.

Whilst the diggers were becoming more and more dissatisfied with the maladministration of the laws upon the gold-fields, and the injustice and oppression to which they were subject, Melbourne was in a state of ferment caused by the return of the unemployed, gathered together in and around the town. Delegates from Melbourne travelled from digging to digging preaching "no licence fee." They found plenty of sympathising listeners, and the operation of "sending the hat round" produced results sufficiently favourable to induce the agitators to continue their work. It was not to their exertions, however, that the fight of the diggers against the wrong-doers was directly attributable. A miscarriage of justice more gross than usual took place in Balaarat. Men who believed that iniquity had gone unpunished at the expense of a murdered friend, took the law into their own hands. The whole power and majesty of the law was brought to bear upon them, and then commenced the "beginning of the end" of wrong. A large number of diggers banded together and declared their intention of paying no more licence-fees. In order to give full effect to this determination, and to give it a retrospective character, about eight hundred diggers of Balaarat met in public meeting, and consigned their licence papers to the flames of a fire prepared for the purpose. This act of the diggers was perfectly well known to the authorities, who at once instituted a raid upon the men, calling for the production of the papers that had been destroyed. The police of the district was strengthened by a body of military from Melbourne. The diggers armed and intrenched themselves within a stockade erected for the purpose. On the 3rd of December the police and military attacked this place; about fifteen of the defending diggers were killed, and a still greater number wounded. Martial law was proclaimed, and a reign of terror existed among one of the most industrious and intelligent communities in the world.

During the currency of these events several changes had taken place in the government of the colony. Mr. Latrobe had resigned his position as governor, and was succeeded by Sir Charles Hotham. The *personnel* of the executive had experienced a change also. It would answer no good purpose to refer to them further here, whether as to their influence upon the evils that existed or upon the better times in store. The action taken by the diggers aroused the Government to a sense of the positive wrongs inflicted upon the country under the old institutions. Men, too, who had arrived in the colony with the one definite intention, of leaving it, became attached

to, and felt an interest in, the beautiful land of which they had become citizens. A desire for homes, and for the settlement that homes imply, arose; and Victoria was looked upon by thousands as something more than a mere resting-place upon a disagreeable journey. The Government, too, entered upon a career of comparative wisdom; the licence fee was abolished, and the Miners' Right substituted. This Right is one of the most valuable little documents in the world. It costs twenty shillings a year, and its possession gives the right of searching for gold; its owner can fence in and cultivate a moderate-sized piece of land, erect a house thereon, cut firewood, draw his water, and, by registering his right, at the cost of another shilling, qualify himself as a voter at elections for members of the Legislative Assembly. The Miners' Right was not the only good thing that arose out of the trouble and distress of the year. In the November of 1855 a new constitution was granted to the colony, and the political and social progress has been gradual and regular ever since. It does not come within the scope of this work to trace this progress with the minuteness of the historian. As the present position of the colony is referred to as the various towns, districts, and natural features of the country come under notice, the effect of the work of the Victorians for the last fifteen years will be indicated with sufficient clearness.

Within that period the colony has passed through very many phases of political and social life. Troubles have fallen upon her, and distresses; but one by one she has overcome them all, and is now one of the happiest and most prosperous countries in the world.

CHAPTER IV.

VICTORIA (*continued*).

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT.—VOTE BY BALLOT.—ELECTIONS.—FREE-TRADE & PROTECTION.—CHINESE GARDENERS.—HOME-MAKING.—JAMES MACPIERSON GRANT.—PROSPECTING FOR LAND.—DIGGERS' HOMES.

IN the September of 1856 the first election of a constitutional parliament took place. One of its earliest duties was to arrange for the reception of the new governor, Sir Henry Barkley. That gentleman had been appointed to the position on the death of Sir Charles Hotham, which event had taken place on the last day of the previous year. The troubles that had attended

the government of Sir Charles paved the way for a happier state of things under the new governor. Thorough and radical reform of political and social questions became the order of the day. Foremost among the latter must be placed the eight-hour system of labour, that rules in the colony until now. The privileges and advantages of such an arrangement of the labour market as is implied in the adoption of eight hours out of the twenty-four as a fair proportion to devote to labour, were not achieved without much sacrifice and self-denial on the part of the working-men of Victoria. After fifteen years' experience the system is found to work well, and is held in high favour both by the employers and workmen. The extensive change in the political system of the colony was indicated in a most unmistakable manner in the year 1856, by the adoption of the system of vote by ballot at all elections, whether for the Parliament or for local governing boards. For a long time it had been argued that Victoria, of all countries in the world, was least in need of the protection of the ballot. Victorians thought differently, and, though strongly opposed for awhile, the adoption of secret voting was one of the earliest political reforms effected in the colony. The principle has had a severe test. Very many elections have taken place since its establishment, and at nearly all of them the most important interests of the colony have been largely at stake. Party feeling has run high, and practices sometimes resorted to that reflected no honour on those connected with them. The ballot, however, has stood every test well, and from all sides the evidence is wholly in its favour. One other electoral reform may as well be referred to here. Victoria had imported a good many of the "good old customs" of the mother-country, and among them that of the hustings for the nomination of members of Parliament. The institution lost none of its disagreeable surroundings by being transplanted to the south. Nomination-day at the hustings had just as great an attraction for the idle, the disreputable, and the rowdy in Melbourne, or Balaarat, or Castlemaine, as in Liverpool, or London, or Bristol. Decency was just as thoroughly cowed and made ashamed of itself, honesty as much ignored, and political probity as perfectly torn to tatters under the protection of public nominations in Australia as in England. Not for long though. The whole system died disreputably one day in 1863. The evils attendant on it culminated in the July of that year, when advantage was taken of the right to the power of nomination to propose no less than thirty candidates for a seat in Parliament, then only nominally vacant. The reform had been decided on, and its carrying out prepared for in an Act of Parliament before this event, and

ever since all nominations are made in writing. This refers as well to members of Parliament as of road boards, and borough and shire councils.

The chief political changes in Victoria have, however, turned upon the regulating the operations of various land Acts, and a protective tariff, whereby it was intended to encourage colonial manufactures and industries. In other words, to give profitable employment to those who, having been successful at the gold-diggings, were desirous of investing their savings in reproductive work, or to give employment to that larger number of persons who, having failed in their efforts at money-making in the gold-fields, were fain to fall back upon the pursuits and handicrafts to which they had been originally trained. This latter class had grown out of all proportion to the opportunities for the profitable employment of its members. Many of these had by this time colonial-born families growing around them. "What to do with the boys?" was once asked by a thoroughly honest colonial statesman in the Legislature of Victoria. The somewhat flippant answer, "Marry them to the girls," became a power in the land, and set folks thinking, and thinking allied to action brought about "protection to native industry" in Victoria.

According to *doctrinaires*, this experiment should have resulted in a disastrous failure. For the first time—in an English community such as that of Victoria essentially is—the practice of "buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market" was attacked, and its desirability questioned. It was not only overcome, but destroyed; and Victoria presented the uncommon spectacle of a people taxing themselves so that their fellows might live. However illogical and unwise this may appear the result has been all that was hoped for. Employments other than gold-mining are plentiful enough now, and boys and girls alike are reckoned among the most valuable of properties.

Side by side, and step by step, with the "Free-trade *versus* Protection" struggle, as it was the fashion to call it, the still more important matter of the land, or rather of the settlement of the people upon it, travelled. In order to arrive at a proper understanding of this question it must be remembered that, up to the time of the discovery of the gold, the land of the colonies had been held on grazing leases, at merely nominal rentals. For the purposes of cultivation it was said to be positively useless. Here and there on the banks of the rivers and on the rich alluvial flats lying between the granite ranges, there were patches deemed sufficiently good to purchase and cultivate, but these were few and far between. Their existence was accepted

as exceptions that only served to prove the rule of the land being only good for grazing. This was the orthodox view of things, and as the holding to the belief paid well, it was clung to with a persistency that did the believers in it the highest possible credit.

The anxiety that had led people to wonder what they should do with the boys they saw springing up around them, added to a desire for settlement in the country that very many had learned to love, had the effect of raising up a body of thinkers who dared to doubt the entire truthfulness of the hitherto accepted creed. During all the gold-digging years land had been sold at high prices in small lots and inconveniently placed positions, by the Government. Notwithstanding the high price of the land, and the difficulty of obtaining labour, the result of the settlement that had taken place was of a sufficiently favourable character to tempt others to go and do likewise. "Unlock the lands!" became a cry almost as common in Victoria as "Register, Register, Register!" had been in England after the passing of the first Reform Bill. In the meantime new interests in the land had sprung up. Colonisation and settlement had given place to trading and speculation. The old pioneers had sold out, and their successors calculated on leasing the lands on their own terms for ever. Thus the attempted settlement of the people was met by all the power and influence that old vested interest and newly invested capital could bring to bear against it.

Although unrecognised as an actual influence, the success of a large number of Chinese, who had taken to the pursuit of market-gardening, had no small share in implanting a belief in the minds of many people to the effect that the land was fit for something more than grazing sheep and cattle upon. The Chinese had settled down in the neighbourhood of every gold-field in the colony, and had not only managed to live, but had grown rich upon the produce of the land. They had taught the Victorians a good many valuable lessons. When driven with tyrannic cruelty from one gold-field, they had quietly made their way to another, and out of ground that had either been deserted by Europeans as worked out, or neglected by them as worthless, taken gold enough to make them content if not rich. Others of them had taken in and fenced small pieces of ground favourably situated, and by judicious management made not only pleasant places in the midst of the wild bush, but cultivated vegetable luxuries to which Victorians, whether squatters or diggers, had hitherto been strangers. In Melbourne and its suburbs, on Bendigo, and Beechworth and Castlemaine, wherever men were gathered together, there, by the earliest dawn,

would be seen the Chinese market-gardener, with his wicker-baskets of cool, fresh lettuce and cabbage slung on either end of a long bamboo. The reign of "mutton and damper," with, in the cynically joenlar language of the shepherd and digger, "damper and mutton for a change," was over; cabbage and lettuce, potatoes, turnips, and carrots, then bunches of grapes, and baskets of tomatoes, fruits, and flowers in plenty, and at cheap rates, became teachers of the people; and the lessons taught were comfort and content. Then the working out of the lesson to its natural and legitimate results commenced. Fields were bought — though it was hard work to buy them; for the competition of capitalists and speculators was keen, and the price of land consequently high. Trees were cleared away, fences erected, and houses built. The dense forests were opened, and the hill-tops laid bare. Soon the long and wide-spreading plains were ploughed, and wherever the soil was turned up the land laughed with a rich harvest. These results were obtained in the face of innumerable difficulties; difficulties fought against with a vigour and persistence that afforded a guarantee that British pluck and spirit had suffered nothing by the voyage from one end of the world to the other. How severe must have been the political struggles of the period referred to may be, to some extent, understood from the fact that in the four years ending with 1861 no less than twelve different Governments—composed of men holding almost as many political beliefs, or having no creed of politics or principle at all—held the reins of power, and administered, or maladministered, as circumstances might order, the affairs of Victoria. A country that could survive such inflictions, and then have sufficient vitality left to ensure its prosperity, must be possessed of very strong natural powers and privileges!

Throughout the whole of these political changes and troubles, the people had persistently kept in view the necessity for a permanent settlement for the land question, and the consequent settlement of the people themselves. In 1862 it was hoped that all the difficulties had been overcome. A land bill, containing all the elements of a good and liberal measure, became law. "Homes for the people" were to be provided in plenty, and the operation of the new Act was looked forward to with perfect satisfaction. Two years before, in 1860, some little attempt at home-making had been made, but the political complications of the period had acted prejudicially upon the movement. Still the result of the settlement effected had been of so satisfactory a character, that the utmost importance was attached to the working of the more liberal measure of 1862. The advantages that might naturally be

expected to accrue from the settlement of the people upon the hitherto unoccupied lands of the colony, were pointed out and taught to all, and a perfect enthusiasm on the subject of Home-making sprang up. "Agricultural areas" were surveyed and subdivided into allotments varying in size from forty to six hundred and forty acres each. These allotments were to be selected by the intending settlers in the order of their application; the price fixed was a low one, and the terms of payment easy. Everything was done to ensure settlement, but by a technical juggle the whole affair miscarried. Nearly 500,000 acres of the best land of the colony passed into the hands of speculators and jobbers, and the settlement of the people was as far off as ever. Thus matters continued until 1865. Little settlement had taken place in the meantime; but the desire for homes was growing, and becoming a more deeply fixed principle in the minds of the people than ever. In connection with the political and social changes of the time, a gentleman was appointed to the office of minister of lands, to whom the home-makers of Victoria are deeply indebted for the pleasant abiding places they have found, or are likely to possess in time to come. Lengthened experience, and the wisdom that time brings, may, and doubtless will, render home-making in Victoria an easy and a pleasant task; but to whatever excellence the system may attain, the credit of making homes easily obtainable and secure is due to the wise and kindly administration of James Macpherson Grant. So long as a happy and independent home exists or is valued in Victoria, so long will the memory and work of that man be held in honour and esteem. Mr. Grant was born in the Scottish Highlands, but sought Australia as a home when a very young man. Naturally he was full of the imaginative enthusiasm of his race. A season of training in the study of the law doubtless had its influence in modifying and holding in check the more ardent feelings of his nature. It was powerless, however, to destroy the natural goodness of his heart. When, in 1854, the feelings of a party of diggers in Balaarat led them to take the law into their own hands, and inflict justice where they deemed the law had been powerless, or unwilling to punish, Mr. Grant obtained especial favour by bringing his legal knowledge and influence to bear favourably upon men with whom every one sympathised, although the strict letter of the law had condemned them. From this time forward he was ever to be found defending right and opposing wrong. When he was placed in charge of the lands of the colony, it seemed as though the fates had placed him in precisely the position best calculated to enable him to carry out the work he most desired. To enable the working-men of Victoria to make

homes, not merely abiding-places, but homes in the widest and best sense of the word, he accepted as his mission, and he carried on and effected the work with a singleness of purpose that left no doubt of his entire honesty, and a bravery and determination that indicated the purest spirit of the noblest chivalry. To whatever excellence the land-system of Victoria may attain—and it is gradually growing towards perfection—however widely spread the home comforts of the colony may become, to Mr. Grant is due the credit, not only of laying the foundations of the home-making institution, but of building up the fabric and making its permanence secure.

The success of his labours will be best gauged by the immediate results of the work. The Act was brought into practical operation on the 22nd of May, 1865. On that day fifty-nine agricultural areas were thrown open for selection. These lands were situate chiefly in the western districts of the colony, and were nearly all of them admirably suited for agricultural purposes. The proclamation of the throwing open of the lands had been made on the 22nd of April. In the meantime, parties prospecting for land were to be met in all directions. These "prospectors" were for the most part farmers who had hitherto rented farms, or cultivated their own holdings, obtained either from the Government, or of land-jobbers at high prices. A good number of store-keepers were to be found among the home-seekers, and a still larger number of gold-diggers. Not the least interesting members of this new class of prospectors were the farm-labourers who had managed to save sufficient from their wages to start in life on their own account as freeholders. Half-a-dozen or more of these men—sometimes the parties would contain specimens of all the classes of intending settlers referred to—would club together a horse and cart, pack away their blankets and other camping-out necessities, and taking provisions—consisting of, for the most part, tea, sugar, and flour—commence their journey of twenty, fifty, a hundred, and in not a few instances, a hundred and fifty miles. Arrived at the proclaimed district, a careful coming over of maps and plans commenced. All the surveyed lots were examined, their boundaries defined, and the various advantages of position and quality noted. At night, three or four such parties would select the same camping-ground, and after the supper of hot chops and tea had been done justice to, notes would be compared, and the plan of march and inspection for the morrow decided upon. As the day of selection drew near, most of the prospectors returned home, there to make the requisite arrangements for carrying out their design. Some of them took with them samples of their favourite lots, in the shape of a substantial sod—this with

a view of having their own judgment and power of discrimination confirmed by "the old woman."

In addition to the home-seeker, there was a class of selectors to be provided for, whose existence imported a good deal of what was disagreeable and unfair into the work of selection. In order to put persons who had purchased land prior to the passing of the Act of 1862 in as favourable a position as possible, "land certificates" had been issued to them. These certificates entitled the holder to select land equal in quantity to that of his purchased property, not exceeding 320 acres. These certificates were made transferable. A new trade sprang up, and dealers in certificates were to be met with in every direction, and large numbers of them fell into the hands of persons who intended neither settlement nor improvement of the land they were enabled to select. These two conditions contained the very essence of the Land Act. It was a *sine quâ non* that actual settlement upon, and cultivation of, the land should be included in the conditions of the lease given by the Government to the selectors. Indeed, until the latter had complied with the conditions of residence for three years, the fee-simple of his property was not issued to him. These obligations the holders of certificates declared they were exempt from, and thousands of acres were selected, upon which settlement has never been attempted. The modes of evasion were various, and not always successful; still the stake was worth the risk, and it was one other impediment thrown in the way of the home-maker.

These latter, however, strove manfully for their rights, and complied honestly with the conditions imposed upon them. Throughout the whole of 1865 land selections continued to be held in various parts of the colony. Every fresh selection afforded evidence of the difficulty of treating with and circumventing the speculator and land-jobber. In this the minister of lands exhibited as much genius as he had displayed wisdom in the preparation of the law, and less harm was done than might have been expected. One of the checks given to the monopolist included the recognition of a principle that has since become the chief one of the Victorian land law, and under which all settlement will in future be carried on. Among the many clauses of the Land Act there was one, a very short one, giving the right of selection of land for residence purposes within certain distances of gold-fields. This right of selection in such localities involved also the right to select before survey, and ultimately it became free selection with or without survey. It is unnecessary to go over in detail the various readings of the law and the difficulties that had to be overcome before this

decision was arrived at. It is sufficient that in its working it has rendered homes available to every one, all over Victoria. The right of selection within surveyed areas was, doubtless, a great improvement upon the old auction system; but it had its drawbacks. Among those who desired to form homes for themselves and families were many who by their avocations and pursuits were compelled to reside within certain districts. Chief of these were gold-diggers and others employed in the various works connected with gold-mining. By virtue of their Miners' Rights many of these men had formed comfortable and pleasant homesteads. Their houses were built, gardens laid out, and in some instances fields under cultivation. It mattered very little to such men that in some agricultural area or other, fifty, or even ten or five miles away, land could be obtained with a security of tenure never contemplated or intended under the Miners' Right. There was his own home, already made, full of home comforts, the birth-place of his children, and close by where his means of living were secure. These would rather obtain permanent possession of the small plot endeared by these associations than the most valuable allotment of a district of which they knew nothing, and cared less. Some of these families resided on the very spot of ground upon which the father of the family had pitched his tent in the early days of the diggings. Month by month the little home had grown in comfort and convenience. First of all the calico had been replaced by wooden slabs; then a chimney had been built, a garden enclosed, a wife married, or the mother and children brought up from the solitary misery of Melbourne. An extra room, and then another followed as a matter of course. To enlarge the garden would become a necessity, and so, bit by bit, all the essentials of a comfortable home were gathered together.

Such homes abounded in Victoria, and were among the most pleasing features of the country. Wherever there was a valley greener than usual, where the hill-sides were most sheltered, and the rich alluvial soil lay thickest, on the banks of creeks, in pleasant glades and on the borders of the open plains, they were to be met with, and were always pleasant to look at. As a rule, they were kept scrupulously clean, and their bright windows draped with snow-white muslin always; the trim garden in front, the potatoe patch and cabbage corner behind; the flocks of goats, and tribes of children; the look of home and home comfort that characterised the whole, made as pleasing a place as any ordinary man or woman need desire to see or own. To the owners of these places the operation of the forty-second section of the Land Act gave the greatest boon possible. At first

twenty acres was the maximum allowed to be taken up under the section. As a rule, this was quite sufficient for the class of settlers referred to, and the garden became a field or a vineyard forthwith, and home comforts were multiplied immensely. By-and-by the section was so worked that one family could take up 80 acres of land under its provisions. This, again, was extended to 160; and now that the principle of free selection pervades, the whole of the land law, 320 acres can be taken up in any part of the colony.

The experiences of the years 1865—6 fully justified this extension of the fashion of free selection. By the end of the latter year over 25,000 persons, or rather families, had settled upon land selected under the new Act. Altogether these people numbered 98,000. Considerably over 700,000 acres had been fenced in, of which a large proportion was under crop; and the various improvements effected were valued at nearly £450,000. The live stock possessed by these settlers numbered 4,300 horses, 27,000 head of cattle, and 180,000 sheep, besides pigs and poultry in equally large proportions. This settlement and accumulation of property took place in nearly every district of the colony, and its effects, moral and social, were in the highest degree satisfactory.

On the 1st of February of the year 1870, a still more liberal land law than that of 1865 came into operation. By it the principle of the forty-second section of the last Act was extended to all the lands of the colony. The chief, and, indeed, the only important feature of the new law may be described in very brief terms. Any person resident in Victoria may, in any part of the colony, select any number, not exceeding 320, of acres of land—excepting, of course, certain reservations for water frontage, &c.—and obtain a security of tenure equal to any freehold in the world. The price of the land is 20s. per acre, and, should the selector desire it, he can pay the purchase-money in ten yearly instalments of 2s. each. If, at the end of three years, he has fulfilled the conditions of settlement and improvement, he can, by paying the balance of 14s. per acre, obtain the Crown grant of his property at once.

Under the new Act the maximum quantity of land that may be selected by one settler is reduced from 640 to 320 acres. This, however, can scarcely be looked upon as a disadvantage. A farm of 320 acres is quite as large as any ordinary settler, possessing only moderate means, can conveniently manage. Large numbers of the selectors of 1865 found themselves greatly straitened in means, and their chances of success diminished, in consequence of having selected allotments in excess of their requirements. Of course the man who selected 640 acres—a mile square—had to pay rent and make

improvements in proportion to the size of his holding. This state of things was forced upon many settlers in consequence of the large number of certificates held for moderate-sized pieces of land, from 40 to 100 acres including, perhaps, the outside range of them. Of course every certificate-holder was an applicant, and by them the smaller-sized allotments were quickly taken up. When the turn of the ordinary selector came round, the chances were, that only the large-sized blocks remained. From these he made the best selection he could, and in very many instances found himself possessed of a large extent of land with means totally inadequate to its proper improvement. In consequence of the inconvenience attendant upon this excess of selection, the then Minister of Lands, Mr. Grant, issued a regulation by which intending settlers, who had been totally disappointed at the land selections, could divide with the others who had obtained more land than they could manage. The regulation under which these arrangements were made was of incalculable advantage to hundreds of home-seekers. Under the provisions of the law now in force the settler takes up neither more nor less land than he desires, and that fact includes not the least of the advantages consequent upon a system of "free selection before survey."

By the beginning of 1870 the success of home-making and settlement in Victoria was an assured fact. At that time over 30,000 holdings of various sizes were in the hands of home-makers. These new-fashioned farmers (many of them were very new-fashioned, having been brought up as tailors, and carpenters, and bootmakers, and, indeed, to all kinds of trades, callings, and professions, save that of farming) had raised from rather more than 288,000 acres of land no less than 5,697,000 bushels of as good wheat as was ever grown in the world. Over 3,500,000 bushels of oats rewarded the cultivation of 144,000 acres of land. Barley and maize and other cereals were raised in similar proportions. There were grown also nearly 130,000 tons of potatoes, 225,000 tons of hay, as well as large quantities of turnips and mangold wurtzel. Over 85,000 hundred weight of grapes were made into about 600,000 gallons of wine. These quantities do not include the produce of market and other gardens, but simply the result of one year's labour of men who had settled down to what was to most of them a new and little understood pursuit. One other peculiarity attaches to these novel industries. The whole of this immense quantity of food was raised upon land that a few years ago was declared to be worth not the smallest British coin per acre, and of which it has been over and over again asserted that it was useless for any other purpose than the grazing of sheep and cattle.

Victoria contains 55,645,660 acres of land. Of this quantity less than 10,000,000 acres have been leased or purchased from the Crown. Authorities differ as to the extent of the remaining land available for profitable settlement. Not long ago, as has been shown, settlement and cultivation of the land was looked upon as next to impossible. How far this idea was erroneous can be easily understood. So, in time to come, land now deemed useless may be utilised and made productive. Taking it for granted that 10,000,000 acres are utterly useless, the remainder may be classified somewhat as follows:—Of rich alluvial flats lying between the ranges of hills and on the banks of rivers, 23,000,000 acres; of black and chocolate soils, of unusual richness and value, 8,000,000; and of light and sandy soils, chiefly situate near where the granite formation crops out on the surface, 5,000,000 acres.

It has been held by some people that very much of the land now deemed positively worthless, may, by-and-by, be applied to uses hitherto not thought of. One long tract of country called the Mallee is usually looked upon as being among the least useful of the lands of Australia. The mallee, from which the district takes its name, is a tall, sombre-looking tree, varying in height from ten to forty or fifty feet. It stands sheer upright, bearing on its top a few scanty, dull-looking leaves. In some places they grow so closely together that they form a dense and almost impenetrable wall. Even when it is less thickly planted it is difficult work to make way through it; strong, rope-like vines turn and twist round the trunks of the trees, matting themselves into dense sheets of grim-looking greenery. No grass grows between the spaces of the mallee, yet its deepest recesses are filled with a strange and wonderful life, of which very little is known. Year by year, as roads are cut through this wild region, fresh phases of nature's workings present themselves, and objects of beauty and interest are discovered. Every now and then a small green opening in the heart of the Mallee is taken and cultivated, and pleasant gardens grow up, and the wilderness blossoms. It is a dry and thirsty land: but at the roots of some of the melancholy-looking trees a little reservoir of water is found. The roots of the mallee only penetrate a few inches under the ground, and on being cut a clear, cold stream of water runs out, and a welcome treat it is to the wanderer through the scrub. Some people think it not improbable that this country of the mallee will one day be cleared of its native trees and bear vines, upon which shall grow grapes, and that the wine thereof will be racy of the soil, have a character—and a high one—of its own, and add one more to the wealth and comfort-making adjuncts of Victoria.

Utilising waste lands is not the only industry of Victoria, however. One hundred and twenty breweries manage to manufacture and sell nearly 20,000,000 gallons of beer; and this industry is rapidly increasing in importance. Barley is not a safe crop in Victoria, consequently a good deal of the malt has to be imported. Hops of good quality have been grown for many years in Tasmania, and within the last few years they have been successfully cultivated in Victoria. Among the land selectors of 1866 was one who understood something of hop plantations. Down away in Gipps's Land, on the shores of Lake Wellington, he took up 200 acres of heavily-timbered, rich, black, loamy land. It looked more like a muddy swamp than anything else, and it required a stout heart to commence digging and trenching and clearing this bit of Australian forest. At the end of 1869 this Victorian hop-grower had over 10 acres of his swampy ground under crop, and his "picking" was a profitable one. Thus a new source of riches has sprung up in a spot that, ten years ago, was almost as much unknown as the continent of Australia itself a hundred years ago. "Hop Villa" this pleasant place in Gipps's Land is called, and it will doubtless prove to be the pioneer of many another Victorian hop-garden.

There are in Victoria nearly 1,000 manufactories of various kinds and descriptions. Among them may be named a cloth mill at Geelong, iron founders and engine-makers at Melbourne, Balaarat, Bendigo, and Castlemaine, and on nearly every gold-field's town. There are a good number of tanneries, the leather from which is highly esteemed in the English market. Soap and candle makers are to be found all over the colony. Clothing and boot factories, and many others, employing not less than 15,000 persons, abound, chiefly in and around Melbourne. Of the workers nearly 3,000 are women and children, who obtain good wages. Besides the gold mines, there are stone and slate quarries—100 of them—and from them, in the year 1869, there were taken nearly 500,000 tons of bluestone, large quantities of which having been brought to England as ships' ballast, now serves to form some of the best roads round London. About 500 tons of granite were quarried in that year. Two thousand tons of slates were taken out and manufactured. This industry may be developed to an almost incalculable extent. Some 5,000 tons of sandstone added to the acquired riches of the year, and the total value of the stone workings was estimated at £60,000.

There are employed on the various gold-fields of the colony over 6,000 machines, valued at £2,250,000 sterling. These machines consist of pumping-engines, used for the purpose of draining the deep alluvial gold leads of

Balaarat, and the equally deep shafts in the various quartz mines. Upon most of these, crushing-machines are used, and they are employed day and night for six days a week in stamping out and washing the gold from its matrix. The gold thus stamped and washed, retorted and melted, during the year 1869, was worth £5,363,759; the gold obtained in 1871 being 1,368,942 ounces.

The localities of some of these industries, mines, manufactories, farms and houses, will come under notice when the natural features of the various districts are described.

CHAPTER V.

VICTORIA (*continued*).

THE BORDER-COUNTRY—A MOUNTAIN LAKE—THE GOLD-FIELDS OF THE HILLS—AUSTRALIAN FERN TREES—FERNS AND FLOWERS—THE FORESTS—BIRDS—GIPPS'S LAND—THE SOURCE OF THE MURRAY—MOUNTAIN HERBAGE—THE GATES OF THE MURRAY—THE WATER FALLS—NATIVE NAMES—CATTLE LIFTING—TRAVELLING BY STRANGE ROADS—A CHANGE—ALBURY—RIVERINA—THE PIONEERS OF THE VINE—RARE WINES.

THE country through which the dividing line between Victoria and New South Wales runs is wild and mountainous. There is little or no settlement upon it, and the mountain passes are known only to stock-drivers and those "waifs and strays" of the Australian bush, who, having spent a life-time in the wilderness, cling to the homesteads dotted at rare intervals on the hill-sides and in the valleys, with a pertinacity that would seem to indicate the existence of comfort not understood by the outside observer. This borderland is a strange and weird country. The Great Australian Alps here shoot out a spur that runs almost parallel with the dividing line down to the sea. Forest Hill, the point at which the dividing line joins the head waters of the Murray, stands the highest of a thousand hills. From a height of 5,000 feet it looks down upon a mass of mountains, children of a giant family, that spread away to the north for more than 2,000 miles. To the west the great chain runs fully two-thirds of the entire length of Victoria. The coast line runs in the same direction, and upon the southern slopes of the hills is to be found one of the most beautiful districts of Victoria, and perhaps of the world.

Lying in the middle of a vast tableland, and about thirty miles to the west, is Lake Omeo, a quiet, mournful-looking sheet of water, the parent of many rivers, that, flowing quietly from out its placid shores, within a few miles become brawling mountain torrents, that leap down precipices, and wind through deep valleys, until, joining with other streams, they form the Murray, which, after flowing a varied course of 2,000 miles, finds its way to Lake Alexandra, and so to the sea on the coast of South Australia.

Not far from Omeo commences a series of mountain gold-fields stretching away to the west, to within ten or twelve miles of Melbourne—indeed, to the very spot on the banks of one of the tributaries of the Yarra-Yarra, where gold-washing was carried on in 1841, and where, ten years later, the discovery was made that first proved the claim of Victoria to the foremost place among the gold-fields of the world.

Although parties of adventurous gold-diggers from the Ovens district had found their way up to the Omeo in 1852, eleven years elapsed before the wonders of Wood's Point astonished the world. Mile by mile, and foot by foot, the almost inaccessible heights of these mountain ranges were reached, and their treasures laid bare. Through miles of dense scrub, across "heaven-piercing peaks," through the beds of rapid-rolling rivers, in the midst of forests, the tops of whose trees ascend 300 feet above the ground in which their roots were buried, suffering from cold and hunger, but blessed with a pluck that would have overcome all such difficulties had they been multiplied twentyfold, the gold-diggers won their way, and fairly beat the mountains in an open fight.

Of the scenes of beauty met with on the way to the diggings in the hills, every wayfarer has had tales to tell. The fairy loveliness of the fern tree, shooting straight up 30 or 40 feet, and then throwing out its wide-spread fronds, giving a welcome shade from the hot Australian sun, is indescribable. Only those who have travelled in the country can judge of the beauty of these fern forests. The trees themselves are perfect in their form and outline. Underneath and around them on every side whole families of strange flowers grow, whilst ferns of a more delicate beauty still, carpet the ground with an everlasting green. The beautiful "maiden-hair" waves its tendrils over forms and colours of beauty only attainable in these sheltered valleys. Flowering creepers climb round every tree, and cover the face of the rocks, whilst sweet-smelling orchids bury themselves in mossy turf or shelter in the weather-worn roots of trees.

The forests proper of these regions are, if possible, more wonderful and

abundant in the elements of beauty. For the most part the trees grow close together, and the ground-vegetation, being hid from the sunlight and the air, is often poor and scanty enough. When the glorious trees take "open order," however—wherever there is an open valley or hill-side—there the long vistas through the forests reveal bits of beauty that are sources of perpetual joy, not only to the artist, but to every wayfarer who has eyes to see. The mountain ash of these regions rises sheer up for good 300 feet, whilst the gum-tree—the bark-shedding *Eucalyptus* of Australia—towers at least another hundred feet higher. Some of the giant trunks of these trees rise 250 feet before throwing out a branch.

Nor is the country dependent on its trees alone for its beauties. The mountains themselves assume strange, fantastic shapes. The streams that pour from their sides pass through valleys, rush over rocks, and through deep dark gorges, making a music that mingles with the song of birds and the rustling of myriads of leaves. That gorgeously-plumaged and most perfect of mimics, the lyre-bird, has his proper home here. The notes of the bell-bird sound so constantly that the presence of streams is indicated at every few steps. Most musical of birds, too, the Australian magpie—the piping crow of English aviaries—loves the lower lying of these hills and forests, and makes a melody all day long that would strangely astonish those who believe in the worn-out fable of the birds of Australia being without song and the flowers wanting in perfume.

Down on the southern slopes of these hills, towards the waters of the straits that Bass first penetrated, there lies a land of equal beauty, and of even greater value. Some day, not far off, it will be called the garden of Victoria, and will well deserve the title. It is named Gipps's Land, and its lower lands are broken by a series of lakes that were first utilised by those whose interest it was to find improved lines of roads to the mountain diggings. Now, on the inner banks of these lakes—they are only divided from the sea by long sandy strips—there are pleasantly-situated towns and prosperous people. The towns of Barnsdale, Sale, Stratford, Strathfieldsaye, Rosedale, and Longford, all lie on or near these lakes or the rivers that run from the mountains into them. Five years ago this was one of the least known districts in Victoria; now it is one of the favourite "hunting-grounds" of the home-seeker and the free selector. The facility of water carriage, of course, adds greatly to the advantages of the country, and is largely utilised.

Returning to the "snow-capped" heights of Forest Hill, and looking

towards the north, mountains still prevail. Away to the right, the "big back-bone" of the continent stretches up through New South Wales. Readers will already have gathered that the mountains at this point turn from their southerly direction, and bear away in accordance with the coast line towards the west. Abiding by the same natural feature, the mountains northward from Forest Hill trend along the eastern coast for nearly three thousand miles. Away to the north, on the west side of the mountains, there lies the vast plain of Australia, spreading out like a sea of land for nearly three thousand miles also.

When the inland extremity of the imaginary line between New South Wales and Victoria is touched, the natural boundary, the River Murray, bears away in a direction almost due north for about one hundred miles. For the greater portion of this distance the country is still unsettled. Indeed, save by a few rambling diggers and stock-drivers, it may be said to be unexplored also. For the first hundred miles of its course the river passes through a country of diversified and romantic character. Every few miles—sometimes, indeed, at several places in the course of a single mile—it receives tributary streams, that add to its waters and increase its extent. Occasionally it flows smoothly and quietly along a pleasant tableland, and through valleys that would delight the heart of the grazier or farmer. Nowhere in the world are the grasses of a more varied kind than here. The plains are matted with a thick clover that forms a carpet as elastic to the touch, and far more beautiful in colour, than any fabric of the Turkish loom. The lower lying ranges are covered with a more delicate herbage, and the outcropping rocks are festooned with a wealth of flowering creepers. Sweet-smelling orchids cluster in masses among the grass; giant trees tower above the highest ridges, casting their shadows across the valleys that lie between. These tablelands are for the most part of small extent, and, as a rule, run away into gently-rising hills or close suddenly in gorges, down which the infant stream falls headlong for hundreds of feet, to find at the bottom another valley, and receive other streams to carry with it to the ocean.

One of these gorges—the "Gates of the Murray" it is called—rises sheer up, on either side from the water of the river, for full 3,000 feet. Far away the vari-coloured rocks rise, here and there their passage filled with the flowering shrubs that have taken root in some conveniently-placed crevice, or bridged across by a giant gum-tree that has been cast from the mountain-side, torn by one of the hurricanes to which the region is subject. Thus it flows on, scarcely ever turning aside to make its way round the mountains by which

its course is intercepted, but cutting a track wherever an opening in the rock has left a point of vantage upon which its power could work. It is wonderful how straight the course of the river through this region is. It looks as though it had commenced work hundreds of ages ago, with a fixed determination to make a given point, and travel on a "bee-line" towards it. It has done the work too, and has left behind such scenes of beauty as only mountains and mountain streams can produce. Some day the falls of the upper Murray—and, indeed, of every one of the rivers taking their rise on the north and west sides of the Australian Alps—will become celebrated, and men will make pilgrimages to them, in order that their taste may be educated and their sense of beauty gratified.

It is not easy to understand why the range of mountains, from the elbow of which the Murray has its issue, should have been called the "Australian Alps." The coast range of Eastern Australia has characteristics sufficiently interesting, and quite beautiful enough, to entitle it to a name of its own. The mountains of which the grand range is composed have scarcely one feature in common with the Alps themselves. Both have mountains, as their foremost feature, it is true; but there the resemblance, as a whole, may be said to end. The very breadth, and, therefore, their grandeur of extent, should relieve the Australian range from the weakness of being called after its European kinsfolk. The gentleness of the slopes and valleys of the hills of Australia detracts, it may be, somewhat from their grandeur, but adds materially to the beauty, and, indeed, the value of the land.

This fashion of calling Australian things and places by old-world names is a misfortune, and should be discouraged. Why the delicate and exhilarating wines of the Murray, the Loddon, and the Goulburn should be christened ports and sherries, is a question beyond ordinary comprehension, and has neither good taste nor good feeling to recommend it. Fortunately the fashion is changing, and native names are coming into favour. As a rule the native name of a place indicates some peculiarity of scenery, position, or produce of the spot, and should, therefore, be preserved as a landmark to guide those who succeed the original name-givers. The native names of Australia are all either highly suggestive or deeply figurative, and therefore possess a value the nomenclature of the mere passer-by can never possess. One other reason may be urged in favour of retaining the native names of places. As a rule the original sounds better than the imported one; and if it is desirable that we should surround ourselves, as far as possible, with beautiful things, the rule must certainly apply to sounds as

well as to sights. Australians have learned somewhat of this of late, and seldom interfere with the native names nowadays. Some of the names given by the blacks to places and things have been distorted and made ugly because of a grotesque or incongruous idea having been received by the white man who first heard the sounds; but, generally, these names will be found strictly in accordance with good taste, and a careful definition of the nature and character of the things and places referred to.

Although the passes of the mountains that divide the coast-line of Victoria from the vast river valleys and far-spreading plains of the north and west of the continent have presented almost insuperable obstacles to the ordinary explorer and traveller, they are not altogether unknown to others. The passage and settlement of gold-diggers, and the occasional inroads of stray stock-drivers or shepherds, have been already referred to. There has, however, existed a more systematic fashion of travelling over the mountains than is included in the doings and wanderings of these people. If tradition is to be believed—the tradition of a score of years or so ago—there are men living who have not only crossed the mountains over and over again, but to whom the tracks and windings round the hills are perfectly known and made use of. This border-land—like many other border-lands in the world—is a strange, “debateable” sort of country. The boundaries of stations are not so well defined as in the more settled districts; and this, together with the dense scrub that abounds here and there, rendered it difficult sometimes for people to recognise perfectly their own land or the cattle running thereon, from their neighbours’. The complications that naturally arose from this state of things were further involved in consequence of some of the settlers not confining the operations of branding to the ordinary time for a general muster of cattle. Stragglers, and now and then cattle that were not straggling, were run into the stock-yard at all times and in any season that offered an opportunity. Then they were branded by the “runner-in,” without reference to the mobs from which they had been taken, but always with a strict regard to the necessity of placing his own, and not the owner’s, mark upon them. Nor did the placing of original brands upon other people’s horses and oxen exhaust the resources of some of the wild spirits of the border-land. A piece of old hoop iron is easily twisted and turned about, and when, after having been heated to a proper temperature, it is impressed upon some X or K or L already burned in upon the shoulder of a horse or bullock, it is apt to change the character of the mark, and involve in uncertainty the ownership of the cattle. In short, a system of stealing

unbranded stock and branding them, defacing and altering the brands of others, was pretty widely spread, and made it necessary to seek some outlet for the stolen stock other than the ordinary market tracks or roads. Hence the discovery of the "way over the mountain." When several of these "pickers up of unconsidered trifles" had by one means or another got together a sufficiently large number of cattle to make the venture promise profitably, they would arrange a rendezvous—generally somewhere or other on the cold, melancholy plain in the neighbourhood of Lake Omoo—each would "spring his own plant"—"planting," is the Australian euphemism for the act of concealing stolen property, the act of "springing" involving removal thereof—and travel on slowly until he joined his fellows. Then succeeded a rest, extending over a week or two, or perhaps as many months. This would depend on the condition of the cattle, or some circumstance of a nondescript character. The journey towards and along the coast would be taken easily and quietly. Wherever the pastures were good, there the party would linger. When the grass became stunted, then their speed would increase; but the invariable result was, that on some morning a "mixed mob" of cattle, in tolerably good condition, and affording evidence of its members having been taken indiscriminately from a multitude of herds, would be offered for sale in one of the numerous auction yards with which Melbourne then abounded. In those days auctioneers were no more particular than their customers, and, as a rule, the cattle from "round yonder," as the strangers were called, were at once disposed of. Of course such a state of things could not exist now. Auctioneers are too honest for cattle-stealers to live in these times. The operations of the law also has had something to do with stopping the traffic. The fact of its having existed tends to show, however, that "cattle-lifting" or "rieving" has not been confined to the borders of England and Scotland, but has found worthy professors of the art on the other side of the world.

To return to the river. After a time it finds the rocks too hard for farther progress towards the north, so it makes a sharp bend, and winds away to the west—with many curves, however, and places of rest. To follow the stream at this point of its course impresses the traveller who has passed along its higher banks with the idea that the mountain torrent is loth to leave the hills of its birth. It turns and winds round every accessible point and corner. It spreads in erratic circles over and along the few flats and valleys it meets with. Instead of bounding over the rocks that stop its way, it coquets with and plays round the high points, and sometimes doubles on

its course, as though desirous of retracing its way to the snowy hills above. When at last it reaches the overhanging ledge from which there is no retreat, it breaks and divides into a score of streams, and instead of dashing sheer down for hundreds of feet, it drops from ledge to ledge, forming between each, pictures of exceeding beauty. Now and then it widens into deep reaches, lake-like in character, and closed in by gently-rising banks or overlooked by towering rocks. All such places abound with fish, and bright-coloured birds congregate in these well-watered valleys in thousands. Here, too, the smaller kinds of kangaroo are to be found, and the country is rich in natural productions. Down to this point the Murray is sometimes called the River Indi; but for the remainder of its course, until it empties into Lake Alexandra, it is always called the Murray.

After running its westerly course for about fifty miles, the township settlements of the river are met with. The first of these, Albury, is situate on the New South Wales, or northern bank of the river, but is in nearly all its interests and belongings a Victorian town. This indeed may be said of nearly the whole of that portion of New South Wales lying between the rivers Murrumbidgee and Murray. This district or country is called Riverina, and very many attempts to obtain a separation from New South Wales have been made by the inhabitants. It stretches from the town of Gundagai—having as an intersecting boundary on the east the river Tumut—down to the boundary of South Australia and Victoria. It is a well-watered region, rich in flocks and herds, in some few parts well adapted for agriculture, and everywhere abounding in natural herbs, grasses, and bushes. The whole country is one vast plain, through which a thousand streams flow, adding to the beauty and the richness of the land.

The part of the Murray upon which Albury is situate was a favourite camping place with the first adventurers from the "Sydney side," in search of new country. From it they travelled down the river, selecting their crossing-places as the depth of the stream or other circumstance determined. Although other towns lower down the river now compete with it, it is still used as one of the chief crossing-places from New South Wales to Victoria. The construction of the railway from Melbourne to Echuca has diverted a considerable portion of its traffic, but the town is a prosperous one, and is constantly increasing in riches. Albury, if not the first, was one of the first places in Australia where the planting of vineyards and the making of wine was established. In the May of 1870, the centenary of the discovery of Australia by Captain Cook was celebrated at Albury, in connection with

the vintage of the year, in a very significant manner. The pioneers of the vine in the district were fêted by their neighbours, and presented with substantial tokens of the appreciation in which they are held, and the importance of the industry they introduced into that far-away Australian town. Three silver claret-jugs, engraved and embossed with characteristic designs, and inscribed with the names of the wine producers, were presented to each of them. Their names are—Schubach, Frauenfelder, and Rau; and if the man who makes an extra blade of grass to grow is worthy of esteem, certainly the German *vignerons* who have clothed the barren hill-sides of Albury with vineyards, should be held in honour. Any one—save an Australian *vigneron*—to have looked at these same hills, would have declared them “fit for nothing;” but the wines made from the grapes grown upon them are fast becoming famous. They are of a rare and delicate flavour; rich in that indescribable and ever varying something that in the technical and almost unintelligible cant of the connoisseur is called *bouquet*; invigorating, indeed inspiring in their effects, pleasant to taste, cheap to buy, and wholesome to drink. Some of them possess peculiar features of richness, and fulness of character. These have been prepared with a curious care, and are the joy and the pride of the producer. For years they have lain in cellars dug in the rock that breaks out on the surface of the ground upon which the grapes from which they were made have grown. When these long-buried treasures—it must be remembered that a score or so of years counts for a long time in the growth of things Australian—are drawn forth, and the imprisoning cork drawn out, a perfume fills the space around, to which the fragrance of the wild thyme of Hybla is a poor perfume: so subtle and delicate is it that passers-by may gain a joy from it. It was with such wine that the silver claret-cups, out of which the memory of brave old Captain Cook was drunk in the town of Albury in the year 1870, were filled.

CHAPTER VI.

VICTORIA (*continued*).

INTERCOLONIAL DUTIES.—WINE-MAKING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.—GOLD SMUGGLING.—A CLEVER CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICER.—THE WATCH ON THE MURRAY.—A COLONIAL CONFERENCE.—BELVOIR.—YACKANDANDAH.—SNAKE VALLEY.—GOLD WASHING.—BEECHWORTH.—WAHIGUNYAIL.

IN connection with the wine-making of the Albury district, there occurred a singular instance of the want of wisdom that sometimes characterises the dealings of neighbouring peoples with each other. Some time ago the Government of Victoria levied an import duty on all wines brought into the colony. The primary object of this impost was the collection of revenue. Ulterior views were, however, held by some parties, and the law that was intended to aid in raising funds for the purpose of the Government, was declared to be a protection to the native wine-producer also. For many years before this, large quantities of wine had been made at Albury, and at other places on the north bank of the Murray, and in the district of Riverina generally. These wines, in common with the greater portion of all the other produce of the country, found their best markets on the Victorian side of the river. The inhabitants in and around Beechworth drew largely upon Riverina for their supplies, whilst the wine always found a ready sale at Melbourne. Great, therefore, was the consternation of the *vignerons* of Albury when they discovered that under the operation of the new Victorian tariff, their wines were subject to a duty of three shillings per gallon, before they could be passed from one colony to the other. This duty, whilst it operated as a means of revenue when levied upon the ports, sherries, moselles, and champagnes of Europe, was absolutely prohibitive when brought to bear upon colonial-made wines, and threatened to be ruinous to those who had embarked their means and time in the new and valuable industry. After trying in vain to obtain a modification of the law, the Albury wine-growers hit upon a plan of getting out of the difficulty that did them infinite credit. Although so heavy a duty had been levied upon the import of wine, the law paid no regard to grapes. These, therefore, were admitted free. Wine presses and storing cellars were constructed on the Victorian side of the river, the grapes carted from one colony to the other, there made into wine, and so enabled the *vignerons* of Riverina to enter into competition with those of the younger colony.

This scheme of border imposts led to a long series of difficulties. The Governments of the respective colonies entered into a trial of skill, each having for its object the trammeling of the trade of the other. Custom-house officers patrolled both banks of the river, whilst expensive establishments were kept up at all the principal landing-places. Besides trying to prevent the import of duty-paying articles, the Victorian officials were charged with the labour involved in preventing persons leaving the colony having gold in their possession upon which duty had not been paid. This was in the days of the half-crown an ounce duty fee, and of course the temptation of a long and in many places fordable river, often proved too strong for men who, having worked hard for their gold, deemed themselves possessed of the right of removing it wherever they chose. A regular system of gold smuggling ensued. The penalty involved, not only a heavy fine, but the forfeiture of the gold itself. Of course, the smuggler who pursued his work upon a system was rarely detected. He made it his business to become acquainted with the ordinary movements of the revenue officers. These movements included long stoppages in public-house parlours and comfortable sitting-rooms. It will be easily understood how easy the "running" of a parcel of gold became. The real victims of the system were diggers who having got together a little gold on one or other of the upper diggings, were desirous of moving to the newer gold-fields that were then being opened up in New South Wales, or of returning to their families in the adjoining colonies. Many of these men had started on their journey unacquainted with the state of the law, and so, using no precautions, fell an easy prey to the spasmodically active custom-house officers. A good many cases of exceeding hardship occurred, and men were beggared and deprived of the result of years of incessant toil.

Some of the cases of seizure, too, had several of the elements of the grimly grotesque pertaining to them. Of one officer, whose "zeal for the service" sometimes outran his discretion and good feeling, the following story is told. Albury is as famous for its horses as its wines. An Albury horse had won a race, and the prize awarded to the owner of the victor was a massive gold cup. This cup, probably made in England, had been conveyed from Melbourne to Albury by an ordinary carrier. The successful sportsman called his friends together to rejoice with and congratulate him on his good fortune. Among the guests invited was the custom's officer stationed at Belvoir, a town a mile or two away on the opposite bank of the river. The meeting was a merry one, and in due time the prize cup was produced, filled with some of

the richest juices of the Murray vines, and passed from one to the other of the company in loving-cup fashion. Of course the chasing and the inscription, the shape, size, colour, and above all its weight, were commented upon and admired. No one was louder in his praises or more careful in his inquiries than the invited guest from over the border. Having ascertained that Melbourne and not Sydney had been the point of purchase, he made his adieux and disappeared;—only to return, however, and this time armed with powers for the seizure of the contraband cup. The event gave rise to the saying of a good many unpleasant things, and doubtless had its effect in doing away with the “watch on the Murray.”

Unfortunately, all the causes of difference on customs and some other matters between the various colonies, are not settled yet. They are, however, in a fair way of becoming so by-and-by. In the July of 1870, a conference of members of the Governments of New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria, was held in Melbourne. The free interchange of the natural productions and manufactures of the respective colonies; a uniform tariff, with assimilated excise regulations; and a customs union, were among the questions considered. The desirableness of some such an arrangement was admitted by all the members of the conference. Some of the articles subject to fixed duties were considered, and an almost general agreement with reference to them arrived at. Upon approaching the list of goods involving free trade on the one hand, and discriminating duties on the other, difficulties arose, and the members failed in compromising with each other. That the ventilation of the subject produced good results is evident from a paragraph in the report issued by the conference. It reads:—“Although the conference has not arrived at any definite conclusion on the subject, the consideration of the question has led to a deeper conviction of its importance.” An Imperial Act of Parliament appears to have stood somewhat in the way of a perfectly satisfactory conclusion being arrived at. Ultimately the conference recorded its opinion to the effect that the Australasian colonies ought to be enabled to enter into arrangements with each other which would allow of the reciprocal admission of their respective produce and manufactures duty free, and on such terms as may be mutually agreed upon. Added to this was an opinion to the effect that so much of the Imperial Acts of Parliament as prohibit such engagements ought to be repealed.

Besides the question of customs duties, free trade, protection, and some kindred matters, the conference took into its consideration the postal and telegraphic arrangements, intercolonial and between England and the

colonies; the minting of silver—already the privilege of making gold coin is possessed by Sydney, and, after 1871, it is intended to coin all English sovereigns at a mint now in course of establishment at Melbourne; a British protectorate for the Fiji Islands; the retention or withdrawal of Imperial troops from the colonies; and half-a-dozen other questions indicating a growing intelligence and a good time to come. All these things, as they are effected one by one—and they surely will be effected, and that soon—must lead to a confederation of the whole of the Australias, and then the foundations of their perpetual greatness will be securely laid.

Belvoir, the town on the Victorian side of the Murray, opposite Albury, has already been referred to. Belvoir was originally called Wodonga. The name was changed by one of those unaccountable freaks by which government surveyors are sometimes distinguished. Its only importance is derived from the fact of its being on the original main road from Sydney to Melbourne. The Wodonga Creek flows by, and the House Creek through, the township. The Kiewa river flows from the east through the mountains already described, into the Murray, about four miles above the town. It is built, or rather laid out—for there are few buildings—at the base of a range of hills, and on the margin of a lagoon or swamp, over which the waters of the Murray flow in time of flood. Soon after leaving the town, the road runs away nearly due south to Beechworth, the chief town of the Ovens gold-fields. Some little distance to the east of the road, and about the same number of miles from Beechworth and Belvoir, is the digging township of Yackandandah. It is built upon one of the tributaries of the Kiewa river. During the wet season, and in the summer, when the snows upon the Bogong Mountains are melting, the Yackandandah Creek becomes a turbid, troubled stream; it rushes impetuously over its bed, and sometimes overflows its banks. The town itself is a pleasant place, surrounded by scenery that would make any district a favourite with its inhabitants. Yackandandah is the chief town of an important district road-board, the boundaries of which extend over an area of nearly four hundred thousand acres. Some ten thousand persons reside within the district, the rateable property of which is estimated to be worth £400,000.

Yackandandah, so far as its gold-bearing properties are concerned, was discovered by one of the many parties of diggers who spread themselves in all directions after the first discovery of gold near Beechworth, at the latter end of the year 1852. Some few miles above Yackandandah is the pleasant little digging-town of Stanley—Snake Valley, the prospectors of the country called it. The creek runs from Stanley to Yackandandah, for the most part,

between high precipitous banks. The ranges on either side were originally clothed with gigantic and handsomely grown specimens of the white gum; now the sides of the hills are comparatively bare, and the waters of the creek have been diverted from their original channel, and led, by means of flumes and races, round every hill-side, across every flat, and over every gully, in the neighbourhood of which gold could be obtained. In a previous work,* I have referred to the gold-diggings of this part of the Ovens district as follows:—

“In those far-off mountains, gold-digging is work fit for a man, and if any one tired of the commonplaces of every-day existence desires a life at once pleasant and comfortable, let him set out on a voyage of discovery for other diggings, such as lie between Snake Valley and the Yackandandah. The breeze is as pure as being close up alongside of heaven can make it. The trees shine and shimmer the long year through, and have a beauty of form, a brilliancy of foliage, and a majesty of size unknown in less favoured regions; their branches are filled with birds ‘radiant in plumage and prodigal of song,’ and the deep undergrowth of the forests affords shelter to game, that any sportsman who loves to live on the produce of his toil would delight in. It was a merry manner of mining up at the Ovens: no dreary drives to crawl into, or noisome holes to descend. To dam up the waters of a creek, and to turn them among the sweet-smelling flowers and herbs upon some handy point or conveniently shaped flat, to find gold from the roots of the grass down to the bed-rock, to work in the free air, and with a long-handled shovel to throw the sweet-smelling soil into the still sweeter water, is one of the pleasantest ways of growing rich in the world.”

Between Yackandandah and Beechworth—the chief town of the Ovens district—there is a high range of hills. At one point this range resolves itself into a tolerably high ridge, where it is called the Red Hill. The “Dingle Range” is the name generally applied to the line of mountains by which the two districts are divided. Beechworth is a bustling, busy town, built on the saddle of a range, round the point of which Spring Creek runs towards the lower waters of the Woolshed Creek. The high street of the town is a wide, handsome thoroughfare, and as it was surveyed on the very point of the ridge, the houses on either side are pretty much on a level. Not so with those built upon the farther side of a street running parallel to it and towards the creek. The people built their houses on the side of the hill, without any reference to surveyor’s levels. When the government of the

* “Another England,” first edition, pp. 97, 98.

town passed into the hands of a municipal council, a dire misfortune befel the dwellers on the hill-side. The street was filled up to the level of its highest side, so that passengers have an opportunity of investigating the interiors of the houses by looking down the chimneys.

Although thus banked in on one side, the inhabitants have a pleasant enough prospect on the other. Out of one green corner the "Silver Creek" winds round a gently rising mound; to the south the country opens up for awhile, disclosing here and there the beauties of the "Buffalo" beyond. The town has had many ups and downs, and is now by no means the important place it once was. It possesses a score or more of hotels, two daily newspapers, a capital hospital—besides an extensive lunatic asylum, one of three erected by the Government so as to save those mentally afflicted from being sent long journeys to Melbourne—a benevolent asylum, a literary institute, several good schools, and the usual number of banking establishments. There are several tanneries, foundries, flour-mills, breweries, and wine-making establishments in and around the borough, and it possesses a climate as pleasant as any in Victoria. The want of land fit for agriculture in its immediate vicinity is a serious drawback to Beechworth, but its gold and wine go far to make up for this.

After passing Albury the Murray winds away in a direction almost due west, and through a country essentially different from that through which its upper course is taken. Here and there a belt of forest land runs down to its banks, which in a few places become steep and of considerable height. These, however, are rare exceptions. Rich plains and gently rising banks chiefly characterise it. At every turn and bend there is to be found a rich alluvial flat, subject to floods it is true, but of eminent value to the farmer and grazier. In these quiet valleys the grass grows greener and lasts longer than on the more open plains or higher banks. They make perfect paradises for dairymen. In the old days of thirty years ago, when a journey to Melbourne once in a twelvemonth was the rule, the farmers of this part of the world—"Cockatoos" they were and are still called—used to make most of their money by their butter. Many of them had been brought up on the dairy farms of the counties Clare and Tipperary, and were well versed in the work. The old-fashioned crock or keg was unattainable, but hogsheads and puncheons that had originally held English ale or French wine were made to do duty for them. It used to be the pride of the Murray dairyman to so make and cure and pack his butter, that when it was delivered to his agent in Melbourne, it could, when stripped of its staves and hoops, be

exhibited to the world a mountain of golden brightness, the sides of which would glisten with a thousand diamonds of briny richness, and whose sweetness reminded the gazers of far-away meadows and pleasant pasture lands at home. Of late years the Murray farmer has taken more kindly to growing wheat, and tobacco, and grapes than making butter or cheese, so that now the old reputation has almost died out.

The first settlement on the Murray below Albury is Wahgunyah, the chief depôt of the river traffic to Adelaide. Although the first journeys of the steamers trading between South Australia, and New South Wales, and Victoria, by way of the Murray, used to proceed to Albury, the uncertainty of the seasons and of the consequent depth of water, together with the opening up of extensive gold-fields a few miles away, led to the passage being terminated at Wahgunyah. The river is here spanned by a substantial bridge, and the settlements on either side are called Wahgunyah North and South respectively. Wahgunyah North was originally called Corowa, and was selected as a crossing-place by the first settlers on the Ovens river. The surrounding country is flat, and not very interesting in its character. Lake Bulgacaba, a sheet of fresh water about ten miles long, lies a little to the south-west of the town, and adds a very pleasant element of beauty to the scenery of the neighbourhood. A little farther south there is another very beautiful lake—Lake Moodamere—and near it the flourishing township of Rutherglen, the township of Chatham lying a little still farther to the south. The foundation of all these places as townships, as well as of several other smaller settlements in the district, dates from a very recent period. A dozen years ago the country lying between Beechworth and Wahgunyah was little known. Over the whole of the range lying between—the Black-dog Range—there was scarcely a house to be seen. One hotel, situate at the junction of the roads from Wangaratta and Beechworth, served all the purposes of the population passing that way. As has been the case with almost every other district in Victoria, it is to the gold-diggers that the credit of opening up the country belongs. When, in 1858, the prosperity of the Woolshed Creek had become a thing of the past, the diggers of that neighbourhood crossed the ranges, and after prospecting up and down the Indigo Creek for some time, succeeded in opening up one of the richest gold-fields in Victoria. The virgin forest was quickly cleared, and towns, with all the adjuncts of churches, hotels, newspapers, and theatres, rose up one after the other with a rapidity that astonished the most ardent seeker of gold-fields. The yield of gold from the district was marvellous, and as fully thirty distinct auriferous leads have

towards the river. The choice parts of the station were divided long ago into moderate-sized farms, and rented to cultivators at a rate per acre per annum, that covered the whole cost of purchase a few years before. Landlord and tenant alike prospered under the arrangement, and the former, at any rate, always expressed content. In connection with some of these rented farms there are some very interesting instances of the success that attends a wisely-directed industry in Victoria.

Among the adventurers who sought the colony in the early years of the diggings was a party of men, of ages varying from eighteen to forty, from Canada West. These men had been brought up on farms and in the woods, and possessed all the elements of success. Instead of spending money on the voyage from Quebec to Melbourne, they managed to make a profitable journey of it. They either bought or built a good strong brig, of some three hundred tons burthen. This they loaded with such "notions" as their country experience told them would be useful in a new land. Every article of their cargo found ready sale in Melbourne, and the brig itself brought them five times the money it had cost in America. At the time of their arrival the second great rush—the Woolshed rush—to the Ovens diggings was at its height, and to the Ovens they all travelled. The upper part of the Woolshed Creek was perhaps the richest gold-bearing water-course in the world, and when the Canadian party arrived on its banks it was at the height of its prosperity. The claim-holders readily employed able-bodied men at from £1 to £2 per day, and several members of the party hired themselves out at once. Others turned their woodman craft to account, and comfortable weather-board huts and hotels told of their industry and earnings. Carting on the roads—"teaming" the Canadians called it—was one of the most profitable occupations of those days, and to "teaming" several of the Canadians betook themselves. A team of four horses and a covered American waggon could not be purchased for less than from £500 to £600, so that several persons had to club their means together in order to purchase a single team. They understood the value of co-operation, however, and within a few weeks half-a-dozen American waggons were employed in taking provisions from Melbourne to Beechworth, at rates varying from £100 to £150 per ton. Just then the proprietor of Bontherambo offered to rent some of his plain land, fenced in, at a rental of £1 per acre per annum. The Canadian teamsters immediately became tenants of about 100 acres. The season was unfavourable for work on the roads, but the rains that had made the tracks impassable rendered ploughing easy. A crop of oats was

sown, and by the time this was done the roads were in splendid condition, and the journey to town and back made in about half the time it would have taken early in the season. After two such journeys the oats were ready to cut and make into hay. This was sold at £80 per ton, and then the Canadians were in a fair way of becoming rich men. They continued this life for four or five years, and then either returned home to Canada West or settled down in the colony. On the very ground cultivated by them when they were conveying Chilian flour from Melbourne to Beechworth at £120 per ton, wheat has since been grown and exported to England at a profit.

The homestead of Bontherambo is one of the "show places" of Victoria. For a quarter of a century after the land had been taken up, the proprietor had been content to add one bark hut to another, as year after year his family increased. At the end of the time referred to, the homestead presented as queer and quaint, and at the same time pleasant an appearance, as could be found in any out-of-the-way corner of the Old World. The rooms had been joined to each other at all sorts of strange and nondescript angles. Chimneys projected from the roof at points least likely to be the proper places for them. Others of the same family grew out from the sides of the house, looking as though portions of diminutive church towers had been diverted from their original uses and turned into ante-chambers to slab huts. On every side, round every chimney, over every door-porch, flowering creepers had twisted and twined, flowered and seeded, for so many years, that it was difficult to tell where the wall of foliage ended and the wall of wood commenced. Honeysuckle, and jessamine, and sarsaparilla so crowded and crushed the wistaria and other foreigners, that they had in self-defence to grow beyond their ordinary luxuriance and beauty, in order to hold a position with the natives they endeavoured to displace. All round the house, and indeed at some points almost within it, there lay a garden full of wonderful flowers and sweet smelling herbs. Roses grew in such plenty that at the fall of the leaf the garden looked like a gigantic *pot-pourri*. Fruit trees grew on every side, and vines took advantage of the projections of the house to rest bunches of luscious fruit thereon. The banks of the river in front bore melons in abundance, whilst all around the soft velvety turf made walking a positive delight. The trees, and the flowers, and the sward remain: indeed the old cluster of huts still stands, but it is overshadowed by a grander dwelling-place. Just beyond the boundary of the old garden a mansion has been erected. It has terraces and corridors, magnificent entrance-hall and handsome rooms. Plate-glass glistens in the windows, whilst London and

Paris-made furniture garnish the rooms. Everywhere the signs of graceful luxury abound, and the new palace of Bontherambo has taken the place of the old but most comfortable hut.

Such changes are common and take place every year in various parts of Victoria. "Old things are passing away," and a Royal Duke has found princely accommodation in a good many of the "stately homes" of Australia. These mansions are to be met with in every direction in the colony of Victoria. At intervals of a score of miles or so, they dot the wide plains of the West, they nestle under the shadow of mountains, and are to be found on all sorts of out-of-the-way bends and banks of the river. A traveller suddenly coming upon one of these after passing through the unpeopled bush, becomes singularly impressed with the change that is passing over the country.

A change more pleasing, if not so strange, as the substitution of handsome mansions for simple huts, characterises the country lying between Bontherambo and Wangaratta. The change referred to is apparent in every direction. In no part of Victoria has the settlement of the people upon the lands of the colony been more productive of good than here. Wangaratta is an old-settled town, competing indeed with Benalla, about thirty miles away on the banks of the Broken river, for the honour of being the first settled place in Victoria.

Wangaratta is situate on a delta of land formed by the junction of the King and Owen rivers, at about thirty miles from where the latter joins the Murray. Up to this point the Ovens could be easily rendered navigable. The only impediments in the way are the snags—fallen trees—with which its course is here and there interrupted. Several attempts have been made to raise funds for the purpose of clearing them away; but hitherto the project has never been carried out. The completion of the railway now in course of construction,—from a point on the line from Melbourne to the borders of the colony at Echuca,—and which it is intended to extend by way of Wangaratta to Albury, will, in all probability, leave the question of clearing the Ovens an open one for many years to come.

The settlement around Wangaratta has always been of an interesting character. The first settlers were, for the most part, men and women who had accompanied the squatters from New South Wales, by whom the country was first taken up. These people gradually acquired possessions of their own. At first the hut was built on some handy point of the river or conveniently shaped valley in the ranges. In the course of a few years a team

of working bullocks was usually reckoned among the possessions of these working settlers. Then they would acquire a few head of dairy cattle. Every now and then the squatter or his wife would give to the youngsters who were springing up, a calf or a colt. In three years these were cows and horses. This process had gone on so regularly, and was so much a matter of course, that, on the opening of the Ovens gold-fields, there were very few lads or girls living in or around Wangaratta who were not the proud possessors of one or more horses and bullocks.

This first generation of Victorian Australians presented many points of peculiar interest, in their habits, circumstances, and surroundings. Their possession of property was peculiarly noticeable. How they became vested in the ownership of live stock has already been shown. This was almost universal amongst them. Every boy and girl had a favourite riding horse, and often several others running in the bush. Boys and girls alike rode with equal courage and grace; and the skill and quiet with which some of the former could manage a team of eight or ten bullocks, making them obey the slightest touch of the whip, and perform the most laborious work with the least possible trouble and noise, would astonish those who, having gained their knowledge from books only, look upon the bullock-driver as a believer in, and practiser of, brute force, whose ordinary language is a "mosaic of carbuncles." At a "hard pinch," or a "dead pull," there may be much raising of voices and whistling of silken-thonged whips, but as a rule bullock-driving is an art that has to be practised with great quietude and care. In some instances, the influence of the drivers over their cattle is little short of marvellous, and the affection that exists between them very great.

To the native-born girl the riding horse was the chief treasure, and after that a side-saddle. Not that the latter was a positive necessity, but the possession of one was a point of honour. The wooer who would win a Wangaratta girl in the days referred to, had half his battle won when he presented his "ladye-love" with a side-saddle. Happy the man who, after one of his bullock-dray journeys to Melbourne, uncovered the elaborately stitched pig-skin to the eyes of the angel he doated on. The only thing that could come between him and the good he coveted, was the presentation, by some wealthier suitor, of a better horse to the loved one. Even under such circumstances the saddle often carried the day, for horses could be found on every bend of the river, and saddles were only obtainable from Melbourne, at an expenditure of much care and time. To see a group of these girls well mounted, full of life and spirit, untrammelled by any fears as to what

"Mrs. Grundy would say"—indeed, with an utter ignorance of the existence of that estimable lady—racing through the glades and down the valleys of the bush, was as pleasant a sight as one need see; and at one time it might be seen any day of the week. Farms and fences have done much to reduce the number of these pleasant parties, but they are not extinct yet.

As a rule, the natives of this part of Victoria have a strangely, almost delicately, beautiful organization. They are almost without exception tall and straight, with those shapely and tapering extremities usually held to be indicative of high breeding. Their features are finely chiselled, and have a delicacy of outline rarely observed in the stock from which they have sprung. They are pale, but the men have a breadth of shoulders and depth of chest indicative of a high degree of strength. Boys and girls alike have voices singularly low and soft. Their speech is characterised by a brogue decidedly Irish in its tone, but softer and smoother than any brogue to be found in Ireland. They are industrious and shrewd, but the business in which they engage must be one in which they have a decided feeling in order to ensure success. Trade pure and simple, and of the ordinary kinds, is little affected by them, and whenever practicable they devote the whole of their attention to the rearing of horse and cattle stock. A drunken white Australian is scarcely, if ever seen, and many of them have grown up to the estate of men and women without having tasted intoxicating liquors. In this matter they singularly differ in habit with their immediate forefathers, as well as with the majority of the newcomers by whom they are surrounded.

These remarks scarcely apply to the children born and brought up in the larger towns of the colony. In too many instances the reverse, both physically and morally, may be accepted as being nearer the truth. In the older districts, such as Wangaratta, Benalla, and some of the south-western districts, the second generation of native Australians are springing up. It will be an interesting study to watch how far the characteristics of their fathers have been inherited by them.

Above Wangaratta, the only towns of importance on the Ovens river are Myrtleford, Porepunkah, and Bright. The first are purely digging towns, the former being situate near the Buffalo, and the latter near the Buckland, Ranges. The description already given of the country bounding the head waters of the Murray will apply in all essential particulars to the country in which the Ovens takes its rise. Porepunkah is situate near the junction of the Buckland and the Ovens rivers. The surrounding scenery is very beautiful,

and there are few more desirable places for settlement than in its neighbourhood. It is out of the way, and a rough country lies between it and the more settled districts, but it is a pleasant place, these drawbacks notwithstanding.

The King river has its rise on Mount Bullar, about fifty miles to the south of Wangaratta. It traverses a very beautiful country, upon which very little settlement has taken place. Near its head waters there are several waterfalls, the largest having a sheer drop of two hundred feet. The Broken river takes its rise in the same ranges, and runs a course of over one hundred and fifty miles before discharging into the Murray, a few miles to the east of Echuca. The Broken river is indeed the only tributary of any importance received by the Murray on the Victorian side of the river for a distance of nearly one hundred miles.

Benalla is the only town of any importance on the Broken river. All up and down its banks, almost from the head waters on Table Top, to its junction with the Murray opposite Lake Moira, settlement has taken place, and prosperous communities settled. They are, however, for the most part, composed of few persons, and at long distances apart. Benalla is quite an interesting, and exceedingly pleasant-looking, town. Its position is capital, and to the traveller who has just crossed the somewhat barren ranges around Greta to the north, or the long swampy road from Baddaginnie to the south, it has a most welcome aspect. Plan and design have had a good deal to do with this. In very many of the Victorian towns men seem to have built their houses, and laid out their lands, without the slightest reference one towards the other, or with regard to good taste. In Benalla the Government offices, including the Post and Telegraph Offices, and the Court House, have been so arranged as to give a look of importance to the whole. One, at any rate, of the hotels, is a perfect model in its way; whilst the banks, schools, and churches have all some commendable points about them.

On the banks of the Broken river, near Benalla, there are to be found some of the most beautifully laid-out grounds and pleasant homesteads imaginable. The orchards and vineyards are noted for the luxuriance and quality of their fruits. Some few years ago there was one inhabitant of Benalla who had a strange and terrible story to tell of the early days. He was a member of one of the parties of settlers from "the Sydney side." They had been encamped on the river for some time when it was discovered that several of their working bullocks had strayed. The man in question was selected to go after the stragglers; and as the cattle were quiet, and were supposed not to have travelled far, he started off on foot. He came upon

their tracks soon after leaving the camp, and traced them into Futtlers Ranges, a long line of hills running between the Broken and the Ovens rivers, and parallel with both. He came up with the cattle just at nightfall, and knowing the almost impossibility of heading them for home in the dark, he determined to camp out for the night, and gather his charge together in the morning. Fortunately, on starting he had put a piece of "damper"—bread baked in the ashes—into his pocket. He had no tea, and of course missed that universal friend and companion of the Australian bushman, but a pipe of tobacco served to satisfy him instead. He made a fire, and lay down to sleep. He dozed in a troubled sort of half-dream for an hour or two, when a sound, that would only have been noticed by a bushman, attracted his attention. He raised himself cautiously, when a sharp whirr close by assured him of the danger of his position, and the necessity of protecting his life. He was wide awake in an instant. A single glance at the stars served to show him the way he must travel in order to reach a refuge. By the time he was on his legs his well-practised eyes had discerned fully a dozen of blacks standing across the track he intended to follow. There was no time to finesse or seek a cover, so with one dash he cleared the line of natives. The black fellows were taken aback by the suddenness of his action; but before he had got twenty paces they turned and saluting him with a shower of spears, started in pursuit. There was no room for winding or doubling in the affair, for the bushman knew he was just as likely to run into the hands of fresh enemies as not. It was, therefore, a clear case of a straight run across the country—and a terrible run it proved to be. He was fully fifteen miles from the camp, and there was no chance of aid at any intermediate distance. The savages made the "night hideous" with their yells, whilst the occasional spears that fell on either side and ahead of him told the fugitive that his only chance of safety lay in continuous flight. The miles seemed to lengthen out interminably. He judged of the progress he made by the creeks he crossed, for he had travelled the country once before, and a bushman never forgets such landmarks as water-courses and mountains. Sometimes, from the silence of his pursuers, he thought the chase was slackening; but a spear falling nearer to him than usual, told that the pause had only been made in order to give better aim to the weapon sent after him. On he pressed, panting and almost fainting, until at length a faint glimmer through the trees indicated the precise position of the camp he had left in the morning. The Blacks had evidently discovered this earlier than the bushman, for a shower of spears, better directed than usual, had served to quicken his speed only a few minutes before. This was evidently the farewell shot of the enemy, but of it the

fugitive knew nothing. He pressed on until his rapid footsteps aroused his friends. As soon as their attention was drawn towards him he fell exhausted to the ground. When taken up he was insensible, and so continued for some hours. With the daylight it was seen that his hair, a deep brown on the previous morning, was turned to a snow-white; and so it continued until his death—a perpetual record of his terrible flight for life. The record of the vengeance on the Blacks is not so plainly told, but that it was a severe one may be taken for granted. “God’s image in ebony” was not treated with tenderness in those days, and the Australian native was sufficiently black to justify white men in shooting him; that is, when poisoning by means of a dole of flour was not a more convenient method of getting rid of the nuisance.

This rapid run took place thirty years ago, and times and manners have changed with both white men and black. The black man is “protected” now. Once a year he has a blanket served out to him by the Government. Many of them are treated kindly at the stations when they choose to call, but it is to little purpose. The process of protection and acts of kindness are gradually “civilising” them out of existence, and in a very few years the obituary notice of the last Victorian black may be expected. They wander about the country in disconsolate-looking parties of ten or twelve, begging from all they meet, and often starving rather than work. The half-castes, as a rule, follow the same fortune, and in all probability will be involved in the same fate. It has happened in other parts of the Australias, and must happen in Victoria.

CHAPTER VIII.

VICTORIA (*continued*).

THE MEETING OF THE WATERS.—THE GOULBURN.—THE CAMPASPE.—SEYMOUR.
—MURCHISON.—A MODEL STATION.—WIIROO.—RUSHWORTH.—WARANGA.—
MOIRA.—BALACLAVA.—REPRODUCTION IN AUSTRALIA.

As though to make amends for its long unfed course from the Ovens to the Broken river, the Murray receives within the next few miles two of its most considerable and important tributaries, the rivers Goulburn and Campaspe. Both of these streams have their rise in the dividing range, but at a considerable distance from each other. The head-waters of the Goulburn

are to be sought on the same or an adjoining spur of the range upon which the Broken river has its birth. The source of the Campaspe lies farther west, among the hills that lie between Mount Macedon and Mount Alexander. Save on one part of its course, where the Goulburn makes a considerable bend to the east, both rivers keep a northerly direction. There are few towns of any importance on the banks of the Goulburn, although the opening up of the Gipps's Land diggings and the settlements under the New Land Act have had the effect of causing a good deal of agriculture. The chief town on the river is Seymour; and until the opening of the gold-fields among the Gipps's Land ranges, the country above this point was devoted entirely to the grazing of sheep and cattle. The engravings of "The Valley of the Goulburn," and a "Cattle Station" on the river, convey a most life-like idea of the country and of the mountains beyond.

Seymour became a town of considerable importance immediately on the opening of the Ovens gold-fields in 1852. With the exception of Murchison, about thirty miles lower down, the only practicable crossing-place on the Lower Goulburn was not far from where Seymour now stands. A settlement of people on the spot was a natural consequence. At very many points between Seymour and the Murray, the Goulburn assumes noble proportions, spreads out into long and wide reaches, having on either bank a country of great beauty and fertility. On the west bank of the river one of the largest vineyards in Victoria has been formed. It has been scarcely so successful as others on a less pretentious scale. This is accounted for, to some extent, by the fact that "Tabilk," the name of the vineyard, is managed by a staff of officers on account of a company; the others being carried on by the owners for their own use and benefit.*

Murchison, although admirably situate, and in the midst of a prosperous pastoral and agricultural district, is a township in little more than the name. The river flows by, a broad deep stream, adding a beauty to the scenery only to be fully appreciated by those whose lot has been cast in districts where flowing streams are rare. The town consists of a score or so of houses; but within the last few years—that is, since the passing of the Land Act of 1865—the homesteads round about have been built almost as closely together as the houses of the town itself. Nearly all the farms in the neighbourhood are on a large scale, and on most of them nearly all the appliances of high-class English and Scotch farming are to be found in daily use. The crops are, as a rule, confined to wheat and oats; every farm, of course, having its vineyard attached to it.

* R. H. Horne, the poet, was the original projector of Tabilk.

In connection with the selection of land for the purposes of settlement, one of the most pointed instances of the power of the land speculator was to be found in this district. By virtue of certificates purchased in the open market, the holders of the pastoral leases were enabled to acquire land in such quantities that their possessions of this character extend from the banks of the Goulburn to those of the Campaspe, a distance of about thirty miles. Of course all this country is not comprised within a "ring fence;" for the "free selector," particularly in the neighbourhood of Lake Cooper and on the banks of both rivers, obtained allotments, and in almost every case success has attended their efforts at home-making. Notwithstanding these breaks in the large holdings, the traveller who crosses the country lying between the Goulburn and the Campaspe has to traverse many a long weary mile over the Wanalta and other plains, either within or alongside of a seemingly endless wire-fence; and of all the boundaries invented by man as a landmark, such a fence is the most depressing and cheerless. It looks for all the world as though a race of broad-shouldered pigmies had run a double telegraph-wire from somewhere where nobody lives to some other place to which nobody ever dreams of going. It is only fair to say that on the stations referred to, Toolamba and Wanalta, all the processes connected with sheep-farming are carried on after the most approved fashion. The breed of the sheep, their pasturage, the shearing, preparing and packing of the wool, are all conducted on a plan calculated to ensure the uttermost value out of the property and its working. It is a model establishment of its kind, and deserves to be as successful as it is perfect.

A few miles to the west of Murchison there lies a gold-mining district almost unique in its character. Whroo, Rushworth, Waranga, Moira, and Balaclava, the places comprised within the district are called. Balaclava is, or was, a hill. Now it is only part of one, and by-and-by there will be nothing of it left. Balaclava Hill contained gold through the whole length and breadth, height and depth, of its extent. The treasure only existed in minute particles at any given point; but so universally was it distributed, it was found worth while to take the hill away bodily, crush and stamp it, and with much pain and labour and cost, separate the golden particles from the mass of earth and rock with which it was intermixed. Taking the proportionate amounts of gold and earth, the hill of Balaclava was perhaps the poorest auriferous ground ever worked. It rewarded its workers with fortunes, nevertheless.

An instance of the reproductive or recuperative powers of nature in Aus-

tralia may be cited in connection with the little settlement at Whroo. When the "dry diggings of the Goulburn" were discovered in 1853, one of the richest and shallowest of the "leads" was found to run down a gully trending from Balaclava to the scrub beyond the present village of Whroo. This gully or valley was covered with tolerably heavy timber, the trees on the south, towards Mount Ida, being stunted and far apart, whilst on the east, towards Murchison, on the Goulburn, a dense scrub took the place of the comparatively open forest. Through this scrub the diggers cut a straight lane or alley, the school of green saplings rising on both sides, a dense and almost impenetrable wall. Three or four thousand diggers made short work of the trees standing in the valley running from Balaclava to Whroo. There was not much timber used for mining purposes in those days, but every party of diggers kept up a fire night and day; and as a giant tree formed the basis or foundation of every fire, it can be easily understood how rapidly the tall trees were disposed of. By or soon after the Christmas of 1853 there was neither wood nor water at or near Whroo, and the diggers deserted the place in a body. During the next seven or eight years a miner would now and then go back to the scene of his early successes on the dry diggings, and many of them succeeded in growing rich. By 1863 the blackened stumps of the forest left by the workers of 1853 had thrown out branches and limbs, and the whole valley had become again a forest of tall and closely-growing trees. In a good many instances the old workings were turned into dams and reservoirs, and by the aid of the water caught in them, the earth thrown away ten years before was turned into gold. Again the forest was cut down, this time chiefly for building and mining purposes. By-and-by the "tailings" had all been washed, all the gold extracted, and the water failed. Again the place was deserted; and in 1867, the home-seeker in search of a suitable allotment, had no little difficulty in making his way through the valley that had twice within fifteen years been cleared of its trees, and opened to the light. This occurred in one of the districts apparently least favourable for settlement in Victoria. Now pleasant homes abound in and around Whroo.

Rushworth is the chief town of this out-of-the-way district; and a queer, quaint, odd-looking town it is. It seems as though it had grown old from the sheer want of life and occupation. Its one street is bounded on either side by well-built and comfortable-looking houses, and the main track from every house leads into a most venerable-looking churchyard. There is a brewery in the town, but all its surroundings are of so settled and solid a character,

that the visitor is at once impressed with the idea that the beer must have been brewed ages ago and stowed in some out-of-the-way cellar, to be drawn therefrom as occasion required. The street that runs into the churchyard at one end, leads lazily up the sides of the hill at the other, and eventually disappears down the shaft of a quartz mine, concerning the working of which the oldest inhabitant has nothing to tell. The people partake of the character of the town, and settlers who find other parts of Victoria too lively for them, may obtain infinite quiet and comfort at Rushworth and its neighbourhood. Stretching away towards the eastern slopes of Mount Ida, are many little valleys and hill-sides admirably calculated for homesteads and pleasant-abiding places, and every day sees such homes in process of making.

The township of Shepperton lies on the east bank of the Goulburn, a few miles below Murchison, than which place it is considerably smaller. It gains its chief importance from the fact of the Pound of the district being within its borders, and will be remembered for years to come because of the long, weary journeys to it undertaken by bullock drivers and carriers in search of their strayed cattle. From this point to the mouth of the river the settlement is purely pastoral. At the junction with the Murray signs of a more active life at once present themselves, and are to be met with at intervals up to and beyond the township of Moama, in New South Wales, and of Echuca, on the Victorian bank of the stream.

This is by far the most important point on the whole course of the Murray. The terminus of the Melbourne and Murray River Railway is at Echuca, and the trade consequent upon the navigation of the Murray is to a considerable extent centred here. All the live stock from the district of Riverina, including the countries watered by the rivers Murrumbidgee, Lachlan, and Darling, intended for the Victorian market, cross the Murray at Echuca. With the exception of the portion that finds its way by means of the river to Adelaide, the whole of the wool clip of the country for fully five hundred miles to the north, travels to the sea-coast at Melbourne by way of Echuca. Just below the town the river Campaspe joins the Murray. This stream flows through a very important country, that will be more properly referred to when the mining districts of Castlemaine and Bendigo come to be described. Most of the vessels used on the Murray are built at Echuca; and this, together with the fleet of boats usually lying at the wharf or out in the stream, gives the river an air of shipping life not observable on any other part of its course, and contrasts strongly with the silent bush or level plains through which it winds its ordinary way. About fifty miles to the north is situate

the town of Deniliquin, the metropolis of Riverina, and a *dépôt* for pastoral produce.

After a time, when the federation of the Australian colonies is an accomplished fact, it is not improbable that the seat of government will be at Echuca. Already the interests of Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, and Victoria, are closely connected with it, and there is, perhaps, no place in either of the colonies named where a common metropolis could be more conveniently fixed than at Echuca. The main trunk line of railway from Melbourne has its terminus there. That the New South Wales Railway will be extended to this point, cannot be doubted; whilst the great line of all, the iron road that will at no distant day connect the waters of Bass's Straits with those of Carpentaria, will cross the Murray at Echuca. Western Australia, and to some extent South Australia, may always have interests apart from the Upper Murray, although the latter colony derives considerable profit and advantage from the navigation of the river.

After leaving Echuca and receiving the waters of the Campaspe, the Murray turns away to the north-west, and this course it continues to pursue for about three hundred miles. Soon after receiving from the New South Wales bank the waters of Lake Victoria, it crosses the boundary of South Australia, then runs due west for another hundred miles, takes a direct southerly course, and empties itself into Lake Alexandria. The Campaspe is the last tributary it receives from the Victorian side. On the opposite bank it is fed by the Murrumbidgee and the Darling. Both these rivers, the former especially, have numerous tributaries, and drain the whole of the New South Wales territory west of the dividing range. The Darling, through nearly the whole of its course, drains a country of comparatively little value. The Murrumbidgee, on the contrary, is bounded on both its banks, for a very considerable portion of the thirteen hundred miles of its journey, by a rich agricultural and grazing country. Some of the most important of the gold-fields of New South Wales are in the immediate neighbourhood of the river or its tributaries. The area drained by the Murrumbidgee is estimated at nearly twenty-five thousand square miles. When the drainage of its affluents—chief of which is the River Lachlan—is included, this area is more than doubled. The Murrumbidgee is navigable for five hundred miles above its junction with the Murray, and a considerable portion of the wool of this vast pastoral district is conveyed down the river, and so to Adelaide.

After about eighty miles of the north-westerly course has been pursued, the last Victorian settlement on the banks of the Murray is reached. Castle

Donnington and Swan Hill it is indifferently called ; and with some reference to it, the river that has served as a landmark and boundary for so much of the Victorian journey, will be taken leave of for good ; nor is there much to tell of it in Victoria beyond this point. A line drawn from Swan Hill to the boundary line between Victoria and South Australia on the shores of the Southern Ocean, would include on its eastern side the whole of the settled district of the colony. West of the line, and extending over the South Australian border, is the land of the scrub. Wherever the mallee is wanting, long sandy plains prevail. There are a good many lakes to be found in the district, chief among them Lake Hindmarsh and Lake Tyrrell. There are scores of others, however, the names of which are only known to the stockmen or shepherds, who, at certain seasons, move their flocks and herds towards their banks. Some of them are salt, and a profitable industry is pursued in connection with this product. They abound in water-fowl also, and sometimes shooting parties are made to them from the north-westerly gold-fields. The rivers Loddon, Avoca, Wimmera, and Richardson, empty themselves into these lakes, or rather lose themselves in the sands by which they are surrounded, their waters doubtless finding their way into the Murray by underground channels ; but their whereabouts cannot be traced by any surface indication. The Loddon, it is true, has a defined course right into the river, at Swan Hill ; but, save in times of flood, there is rarely water in it. This peculiarity characterises many Australian rivers, the waters of which sink into the surface soil, to reappear, it may be, a hundred miles away.

If the line drawn from Swan Hill to the southern extremity of the boundary line between Victoria and South Australia be continued in a north-easterly direction to the tropic of Capricorn, where it is intersected by the east coast of Australia, such line would enclose within itself and the coast line to the south and east more than three-fourths of the entire settlement hitherto effected upon the whole continent. This, of course, refers to the actual settlements of people, and not to the mere occupation of land for grazing purposes, although within the same boundaries a very large proportion of the flocks and herds of the colony would be found depastured. If this imaginary line, at its crossing point upon the Murray, were diverted in a southerly direction, so as to include a somewhat larger portion of South Australia, it would have upon its eastern side the whole of the white population of the continent, excepting some twenty-five or thirty thousand persons settled in Western Australia, on the Gulf of Carpentaria, the north end of Queensland, and scattered about the newly taken-up country in the interior. The settled

district thus described is perhaps five times the size of England, and less than one-tenth that of the entire continent of Australia.

There is little to say about Swan Hill itself. It is the terminus of a line of telegraph, by means of which the stockowners regulate the movement of cattle travelling from the Darling country to the southern market. This telegraph line pursues a zig-zag course by and over the River Loddon to Inglewood, at which place it is connected with the main communication.

A traveller passing due south from Swan Hill to the coast would pass through and by some of the most interesting and important districts in Victoria. For the first eighty miles of his journey he would have as landmarks the River Avoca on the west, and the Loddon on the east side of him, being considerably nearer the former than the latter the whole of the distance. The first thirty or forty miles of such a journey would be through a sufficiently uninteresting country. Every now and then a pleasant looking and sweet-smelling clump of trees would vary the monotony of the scene, and lakes and lagoons give a variety to the otherwise dry and sandy way. In the summer, when the long thin grass is waving with heads borne down by seed pods, the plains assume fantastic shapes, and towers and towns, rivers and bays, ships and houses, may be seen, only to disappear after a mile or so has been travelled in pursuit of them. On very clear days, and such days are common enough in Australia, the conical points of Mount Hope and the Terricks may be seen far away to the east, and save for these the plain would seem interminable. By-and-by other hills rise into view. To the west a detached and rugged mass is seen, flanked on the east by one of similar character, but greater in extent. Houses are rarely to be met with, but living things are not unknown. Sheep abound; and even in these days of wire fencing, the race of shepherds has not disappeared altogether. Kangaroo are sufficiently plentiful not to be a nuisance, whilst the bustard, the wild turkey of Australia—king of fowls, if the ultimate destiny of a fowl is the dining-table; when living, the gayest-coloured and most stately of birds, and when dead and cooked, the most delicious eating imaginable—is to be found in abundance. The traveller must not be on foot though, should it be requisite to gain a supper by the destruction of a wild turkey. Man, the bustard distrusts entirely. When accompanied by that nobler animal the horse, he may approach and be received with a welcome only to be equalled by the coolness with which the deceived bird is afterwards shot. Under the shelter of a gum-tree bough a hunter may approach sufficiently near a turkey to kill him; but man, alone and undisguised, the bustard shuns; and when once the

bird takes flight, fleetness of foot would fail the fast, although famishing, sportsman. There is other game, however, not so chary: teal, and widgeon, and duck in plenty. There are eatable roots, too, on the plains; and granted that the water-holes are not empty, no man need starve there, for on every clump of trees manna hangs, and nourishing gums abound. Indeed, wherever the mallee appears in sight—and it is a common visitor hereabouts—water should not be needed long, for the wide-spreading roots of the scrub often hold a perfect treasury of refreshment.

Soon as the ranges on the east side of the line of travel are fairly in sight, a country that has already become famous is within walking distance. The bold, abrupt granite range, its sides shining with the waters of a thousand springs, is Mount Korong. It was the guiding point of thousands of diggers in 1852. From Bendigo, and Balaarat, and Castlemaine, they rushed day after day and week after week, only to find for the most part that they had left fortune behind them. From Korong the diggers returned south by way of Mounts Brenanah, Bealiba, and Moliagul. From the gullies and valleys lying round about and between these mountains, nuggets of gold have been taken in profusion. "Every day brings forth a new one." The great rush of 1870—Berlin, the diggers called it—was to a green valley running down from behind Kingower towards Dunolly, and from it, and the country round about, the discovery of nuggets of gold has been a matter of every-day occurrence for years.

The country between the rivers Loddon and Avoca, at this point, is for the most part of exceeding beauty. Trending down towards the banks of both rivers, the mallee is met with here and there, but wherever the rising ridges of the ranges intervene, nature puts on her most pleasing aspects. The valleys are very green—the springs and streams that run through them brighter far than the gold found upon their banks. When once the hills are fairly reached, the rocks and ravines assume the quaintest forms. In some places they have a perfectly smooth surface, covered with sweet grasses, and here and there timbered with trees of graceful outline. Higher up, the rocks are thrown about at random, and form caves and arcades, the recesses of which were hiding-places for bushrangers and murderers less than twenty years ago.

Passing from the region of nuggets and over the line of travel, somewhat to the south of west, lies St. Arnaud, the silver country of Victoria. These mines are on the top of a solemn-looking hill, overlooking an equally solemn-looking sea of scrub, stretching away to the north and west, farther than eye

can reach. To the south and west more pleasant country is met with, and settlement becomes common. The townships of Stuart Mill, Navarre, and further west still, of Glenorchy and Horsham, are centres of prosperous communities. The direct southern course laid down at first, leads through districts still more important. After passing Maryborough and Amhurst on the east, and Avoca, Lanplough, and Lexton on the west, it crosses the Pyrenees.

From this point the dividing range proper only runs for about forty miles farther west. On both sides the range, rich agricultural and pastoral country, and many very pleasant towns, are to be found—Beaufort, and Shirley, and Raglan, and Ararat among them. Crowlands and Elmhurst, with Ben Nevis towering above, and the head-waters of the Wimmera running between, are here, and all of them are pleasant places. Mount Ararat ends the mighty mountain mass that has run from the southern side of the tropic of Capricorn into this pleasant country, which from this point shelves down to the shores of the Southern Ocean. There are other hills, however, beyond, not many miles away; and running at right angles with the dividing range, the Grampians—having Mount William, rising six thousand feet above the level of the sea, as central figure—form a rampart against the farther advance of the range. Farther west still, and running parallel with the Grampians, is the Victoria, and beyond that again the Black Range. With this latter the mountain system of Eastern and Southern Australia terminates.

After leaving the Pyrenees, the line indicated as the course of travel taken from Swan Hill, would pass through the White Stone Lagoon, having on its eastern boundary Lakes Learmonth and Burrumbeet, two of the most important examples of the inland lake system of Victoria. Balaarat lies to the south-east of the last-named sheet of water, but that place will be referred to with more propriety when the larger towns of the colony come to be described. From Lake Burrumbeet to Lake Korangamite, and on to Lake Coloc, the country traversed has on the west, and stretching away to within a few miles of the western boundary of Victoria, a large proportion of the immense pastoral and agricultural districts of the colony. Although vast tracts of this part of the country have been secured for squatting purposes, numerous agricultural and mining settlements are to be met with; and, taking it all for all, the district may be described as one of the most prosperous in the colony.

Pursuing a course directly south from Lake Coloc, a narrow patch of good country is passed through, and then heavily-timbered ranges intervene

between the settled country and the coast. The line followed from the Murray strikes the coast line at Cape Otway, the point of land usually first sighted by travellers from England to Victoria. Westward of Cape Otway, an old settled and prosperous line of country extends up to the South Australian border. The townships of Warrnambool, Belfast, and Portland are the chief centres of trade, and each of them is surrounded by prosperous communities. The land is nearly all of a rich agricultural character, and to this industry the attention of the people is chiefly devoted. Breweries, tanneries, meat-preserving establishments—all the appliances of comfort and civilisation are to be found here. The towns are well built, the main roads good, the people firmly established in their prosperous ways, and sufficiently far removed from the gold-fields to allow them to remain unaffected by the vicissitudes of gold mining.

The Cape Otway ranges run eastward from the Cape of the same name. They are heavily timbered, and only partially explored. Coal has been found in them and gold, and every now and then exploring parties have been formed for the purpose of learning more of the country. Hitherto with little effect, however, and population in Victoria must increase very considerably before all the riches of the coast country hereabouts are fully developed.

CHAPTER IX.

VICTORIA (*continued*).

PORT PHILLIP.—GEELONG.—HOBSON'S BAY.—SANDRIDGE.—MELBOURNE.—THE STREETS.—BANKS.—MONUMENT TO EXPLORERS.—THE RIVER.—THE SUBURBS.

THE entrance to the harbour of Port Phillip is about twenty miles north-east of Cape Otway. Twenty miles farther east still, is Western Port Bay, once famous for its oysters, the beds of which have unfortunately been exhausted. French and Phillip Islands are in this bay. From this point the land trends in a southerly direction for nearly one hundred miles, when the most southerly point of the continent, Wilson's Promontory, is reached. Due north from the promontory is Corner Inlet, to the east and north of which there spreads, for some thirty miles, the rich agricultural district

of Alberton; and farther to the east, again, the lake region of Gipps's Land, to which reference has already been made.

With the exception of an opening about two miles across, between Points Nepean and Lonsdale, the Bay of Port Phillip is entirely land-locked. The width of the available entrance is indeed hardly a mile, and through this narrow channel the tide rushes with a "rip," that tends to make its navigation a delicate operation to sluggish or small craft. The entrance and the shores of the Bay are, however, well lit, have been carefully surveyed, and are in charge of as careful and intelligent a body of pilots as any in the world. The shores of the southern portion of the Bay are flat and uninteresting. As soon as the points are cleared, and the open water made, the view improves. To the east rises Arthur's Seat, and, farther off still, Mount Eliza. Looking to the south, a lightly-timbered and gently-undulating country is seen. From Mount Eliza to Cape Schanck, at the extreme south, there runs a promontory, dividing the waters of Port Phillip from those of Western Port. On the west side of the entrance to Port Phillip is situate Queenscliffe, the Brighton of Victoria. The country round about this fashionable watering-place is poor and uninteresting. The beach itself is beautiful, and the place easy of access, and it is perhaps the most favoured place of summer-resort in the colony. Schnapper Point, on the other side of the Bay, is a dangerous rival; but hitherto Queenscliffe has more than held its own.

After leaving Queenscliffe and the heads, the water of the Bay spreads away to the west, and another bay is formed, at the head of which stands Geelong. When, in 1824, Messrs. Hume and Hovell—the first overland explorers of the Victorian territory—saw the waters of Port Phillip, the native blacks called the place Geelong. The town of that name lies at the head of Corio Bay. On the west the town is bounded by the river Barwon. A country of unusual richness lies on both banks of this river. On the west side the Barrabool hills rise. Every inch of these low-lying but picturesque ranges is under cultivation. Orchards and farms and vineyards alternate with each other, and impart a character of varied beauty to the country, more English, perhaps, than is to be met with in any other part of Victoria. The farm-houses are models of comfort, and the people are well-to-do and contented. The wines of the Barrabool are famous in Victoria. They would be so in England, but that colonists are content to pay higher prices for them than could be obtained here.

In the early days of the colony Geelong promised to be, if not the

metropolis, at any rate the chief town of Victoria. The harbour is a capital one, and the port most conveniently placed as a depôt for the wool from the western districts. Circumstances were, however, against it, and Melbourne took, and has ever since maintained, the position of metropolis. When the Balaarat gold-fields were discovered, things took a turn in favour of Geelong, but only for a short time; and now it is perhaps as quiet and dull-looking a place as could well be imagined. Its hotels are pictures of depressing gentility, its shops have an air of decayed respectability about them, that must have a most repelling effect upon intending customers. The streets are wide; the buildings, some of them in good taste; the public institutions, many, and all of them conducted with the best intentions; still there is an utter want of liveliness about the town, totally differing from the majority of other centres of population in Victoria. One advantage the visitor to Geelong possesses in the shape of two first-class lines of railway: one, forty-five miles from Melbourne; the other leading to Ballaarat, fifty-five miles away.

The Botanic Gardens of Geelong are, with perfect propriety and justice, held in high esteem by the inhabitants in, and the visitors to, the town. They are situate on the shores of Corio Bay, laid out with great taste, and kept in admirable order. All the trees and plants and flowers, of all the countries in the world, may be met with there, tended and cultivated in the manner best adapted to ensure the utmost excellence of appearance and growth.

After leaving the comparatively confined space of Corio Bay, Port Phillip spreads out, a handsome sheet of water, nearly forty miles in every direction. On both the east and west coasts pleasant towns have sprung up, agricultural settlements being plentiful in the neighbourhood of all of them. On the west side of the Bay, or rather on the line of railway running parallel with its waters, the towns of Rothwell and Wyndham are the most important. On the opposite shore Osborne, Mornington, Frankstone, Mordiallac and Cheltenham, are the chief settlements.

The extreme northern extremity of Port Phillip is called Hobson's Bay. Williamstown, the old, and Sandridge, the present, port of Melbourne, flank respectively the western and eastern points of this bay. About two miles below Sandridge is St. Kilda, and two miles farther down still, Brighton. These are the most fashionable suburbs of Melbourne; and, as seen from the bay, they present a very pleasing appearance to the new arrival. A more intimate acquaintance with them will serve to deepen the favourable impres-

sion. Many of the mansions of the merchant princes of Melbourne are to be found in and around St. Kilda and Brighton, and capital specimens of comfortable houses they are.

Sandridge is a thoroughly water-side-looking town; not in the sense that Brighton or Scarborough are water-side places, but more after the fashion of East Smithfield or Wapping. Indeed, it bears more resemblance to the streets bounding the docks at Liverpool than either of the latter places. Fronting the bay there is a long row of hotels, shops, and ship-chandlers' stores. At the northern extremity of the street the railway pier juts out into the bay, receiving at its sides vessels of the largest tonnage. Cargoes are discharged, by means of steam-engines, into railway trucks standing alongside, and taken direct to Melbourne. As soon as a junction, now in course of construction, is finished, large quantities of these goods will be despatched direct to the interior, without any change or stoppage at Melbourne. Many of the cargoes discharged at the Williamstown pier, on the opposite side of the bay, already find their way to Geelong and Ballarat, without any break on the journey.

Sandridge is not entirely dependent upon the railway pier for its shipping accommodation. At the south end of the main street, the town jetty affords ample space to all the smaller and some of the large craft trading to the port. From the end of this pier the Melbourne road runs through the town and along a low sandy road, by the suburban municipality of Emerald Hill, and so over the Yarra, by way of Prince's Bridge, into Melbourne. This road is about two miles long. To get from and to the same points by way of the river Yarra-Yarra some eight or nine miles of water-way would have to be traversed, the township of Footscray, situate at the junction of the Salt-water River and the Yarra, being passed on the journey. The river winds through a perfectly flat country, its banks being clothed to the water's edge with a dense scrub.

Of course the chief line of communication between the port and the city of Melbourne is by means of the railway. The line is only two miles long, but it is an exceedingly useful and profitable property. Of late years it has had an extension running to the eastern and southern suburbs.

The first impressions of travellers arriving in Melbourne at the station of the Hobson's Bay Railway, are not perhaps of the most favourable character. The station is a low, long building, with few claims to architectural or other beauties. After the bright sunshine of the bay, the close shed looks dull and cheerless. Nor are matters much improved when the

street is gained. Flinder's Street is by no means a model of cheerfulness. To the left the very extent of the open space running down to the wharf gives a cheerless and unhomelike appearance to the view. Then, again, the very ugliest of all the public buildings in Melbourne is a prominent object in the scene. If ever the appearance of a Custom-house had the effect of making people unwilling to pay customs dues, the Melbourne house for receipt of customs is that building. Ugly and disproportionate in itself, it is perched on the top of a flight of steps more disproportionate and ugly still. The Telegraph Office behind is a cheerful if not a handsome building, but then it is out of sight of the new arrival, so it has little influence in removing the disagreeable impression produced by the Custom-house and the wide waste of the wharf in front.

About half-way between the Custom-house and the railway station there stands a building thoroughly characteristic of Melbourne. It rises up, story after story—every story being the height of an ordinary-sized dwelling-house—throwing a cool and welcome shade across the open space leading to the banks of the river. It is built of the "blue-stone" found in the neighbourhood; is a plain rectangular pile, pierced at intervals by long narrow windows, but without any break or ornamentation on its walls. Under necessity it might be made a defence against an enemy, but is more profitably and legitimately devoted to the storage of wool. There are many such buildings in Melbourne. They are infinitely superior, in appearance at any rate, to the warehouses erected in London for a similar purpose. The blue-stone of which they are built gives to large edifices a massive grandeur of appearance, that stands out in strong contrast with the bright, clear skies of Australia. The stranger who may happen to arrive in Melbourne somewhere about Christmas, will feel grateful for the shade afforded by the south walls of a wool warehouse. After a time he will learn to love the sunshine, and feel a joy in the life it gives him.

To the right of the railway station Melbourne presents a much more cheerful appearance, although the view is confined to one street that runs up a gently-rising hill, and loses itself in the top foliage of Fitzroy Gardens and the banks of the river. The town, however, lies right in front; and the visitor only needs to walk a few hundred yards up Elizabeth Street to feel assured that it is a place of no ordinary pretensions and importance. The wide and well-formed thoroughfare runs nearly due north and south, and forms the main outlet to the up-country districts; the Sydney road, tending to the north and east; the way to Ballaarat, Castlemaine, and Bendigo taking a

more westerly direction. From the north end of Elizabeth Street, and indeed from every point on the east and north of Melbourne, may be seen one of the most prominent and characteristic natural features of the colony. Forty miles away is Mount Macedon. The mountain stands out, three thousand feet high, bold and well-defined against the northern sky, and looks like the Gibraltar of an inland sea. It is one of the first objects seen by the visitor to the suburbs of Melbourne, and served as a land-mark to all the early gold-diggers. It is splendidly wooded, abounding in streams and waterfalls. In parts its sides are pierced with caves, the exploring of which would yield rare sport to the "cave-hunters" of Devon. From its crown, from a portion of which the timber has been cleared for the purpose of fixing a trigonometrical survey mark, the country stretching away down the Campaspe, Coliban, and Loddon rivers may be seen, with the bluff ranges of Mount Alexander jutting out like the walls of a gigantic fortress. At the southern base of Mount Macedon the Black Forest commences, and spreads away, under various names, almost to Ballaarat on the west, and for a dozen miles or so to Gisbourne on the south.

To return to Melbourne and to Elizabeth Street. The first intersecting artery is a confined but very important one. Flinder's Lane is the Mark or Mincing Lane of Melbourne; structures more massive and more capacious than either of the London centres of wholesale trade contain are to be met with at short intervals up and down Flinder's Lane. Some of the best and most imposing of them were erected on the strength of the profits to be made on the importation of European products and manufactures into Melbourne. Thanks to the "heresy of protection" their first uses failed them; and when free-trade was done away with, according to all the philosophies of political economy, the occupation of the men of Flinder's Lane should have become a thing of the past. They manage to live and grow rich nevertheless; only, instead of deriving their profits from the importation of English ready-made clothing, they amass wealth by the utilisation of native industry. Flinder's Lane is not a lively-looking place, but every morning and evening it glows with a brightness lent to it by hundreds of strong, healthy, good-looking, and well-dressed girls and women, who throng into it, to earn a living by means that free trade would for years have denied to them.

After Flinder's Lane comes Collins Street. This is the Bond Street, the Regent Street, the Rue de la Paix of the southern city. Nearly as wide as Regent Street at its widest part, it has the advantage of being uniform in width throughout its entire length. From Swanston Street on the east to

Queen Street on the west, drapers and jewellers and sellers of nicknackeries, vie with each other in attracting the attention of those who for a few hours of every day make it a portion of the business of their lives to promenade Collins Street. The banks form another important feature here. The gloomy dens of Lombard Street and the Strand stand out in strong contrast with the handsome, bright-looking banks of Melbourne. In the character of their architecture they more nearly approach that of some of the chief West-end clubs, than of the business buildings of London. Some of the public offices and more important establishments in Edinburgh serve to remind the Victorian in Europe of the banks of Melbourne. Polished granite from Peterhead and Aberdeen forms one of the chief features of the external decorations, whilst marble and woods of cost are lavishly bestowed upon and about the arrangement of the interiors.

In the immediate neighbourhood of one of the most modest-looking of these banking-houses there assemble the members of an institution too important to be omitted from any description of Melbourne. The stock, or sharebrokers, of the city have spirits too buoyant, and imaginations too vivid, to allow themselves to be pent within walls, like their fellows of London and Paris. Nominally they assemble "under the Verandah," but in reality they conduct their business purely *al fresco*, save and except when they prefer the bar of an adjacent hotel. They crowd the kerb and invade the footway. They are invariably well-dressed, and almost always, cheerful. Win or lose, it is all the same to them; for, as a rule, they started with nothing, and with a perfect logic they argue, cannot become worse off than when they commenced. They live well, and spend their money freely; concoct and carry through more schemes for making money out of nothing than any similar number of men in the world; meet reverses with a pluck that would be commendable if exercised in any decent calling or profession, and abound in resources of, sometimes, a questionable character. "The Corner" at Ballaarat assumes to have as high a reputation in these things as the "Verandah" in Melbourne. The assumption has not yet been freely admitted by the metropolitans. By-and-by a change may come, and the Corner make good its pretensions. In the meantime, no better advice could be given to the visitor to Melbourne or Ballaarat, who may be possessed of a few hundred pounds, than to "pass by on the other side" of both places.

From Elizabeth Street, eastward to Swanston Street, shops and banks continue to abound. At the junction of Collins and Swanston Street the Town Hall of Melbourne is situate. The Town Hall has for many years been

a tolerably prominent object in the street architecture of Melbourne; chiefly because of the intensely ugly character of the building. This is all changed now, and the Municipal Hall, finished and opened in the middle of 1870, would do no discredit to any city in Europe.

After passing Swanston Street, churches become the chief feature of Collins Street. The Mechanics' Institute is here also, and to the extreme east a number of handsome dwelling-houses give character to the place. The best of them, it may be observed, are in the occupation of the principal medical men of Melbourne. The Melbourne Club, chosen retreat of the upper five hundred of the colony, has its habitation here, and an exceedingly elegant and comfortable club-house it is. There the visitor receives his warmest welcome, and the colonist his greatest comfort.

At the junction of Collins and Russell Streets stands by far the most interesting public monument of Melbourne. This is a bronze casting, erected in honour of the explorer, Robert O'Hara Burke. The monument has two figures—Burke himself, and Wills his second in command. John King, a young Irish soldier, was the only one of the party who returned to tell the tale of suffering, success, and misfortune. Burke left Melbourne in the May of 1860. He was in command of an elaborately-appointed company, that had been organised for the purpose of making its way from the extreme south of the continent to the waters of Carpentaria. He elected to perform the latter portion of the journey in company with three others only. In the face of innumerable dangers and difficulties, he accomplished the object of the expedition, and then he and his companion Wills lay down and died of sheer starvation. The story of the unhappy disaster with which this most glorious expedition terminated, has been told too often to need recapitulating here. It is sufficient for the memory of Burke that he succeeded, where many good men and true had failed; that, besides the "stony desert" of other explorers, he discovered a land of wonderful richness and of great beauty; and that, in the end, he calmly and bravely lay down his life for the work to which he had with so sublime a chivalry devoted himself.

Bourke Street succeeds Collins Street on the north, and has pretty much the same relation to its aristocratic neighbour that the Strand or Oxford Street has to Bond Street. It has a more "colonial" appearance than Collins Street; there is more life and spirit and bustle in it; and at night, when Collins Street and all the parts to the south of it are silent and deserted, Bourke Street is more lively than ever, and shines with all the brilliancy that gas-lights and gaily-dressed shops can give. Here are to be found

the theatres and music-halls of Melbourne, differing in little from the same description of places in England, save that the comfort of the audience is better attended to, and that the prices are, relatively at least, lower. At the west end of Bourke Street stands the Cathedral, a plain and almost ugly brick edifice, erected at a time when plain and inexpensive things were the rule in Victoria. At the eastern extremity of the street the Houses of Parliament and the Treasury are situate. Both are unfinished, and hardly bear description. Some day they are to be models of official architecture.

The Post Office occupies a corner of ground just where Elizabeth Street is intersected by Bourke Street. The engraving will convey a better idea of the good taste and perfect character of the building than any written description. Its interior arrangements are quite in keeping with the appearance of the exterior of the building, and well calculated to facilitate the postal arrangements of the colony.

Running the lines of Swanston and Elizabeth Streets up together, several of the public institutions of Melbourne are met with; St. Francis's Catholic Cathedral being among the first. Then, a little to the west, the old Exhibition building, and the offices of the Lands department; beyond both, the Flagstaff Hill; and, farther away still, the Benevolent Asylum. Swanston Street passes close by the Melbourne Hospital—an institution that would do credit to any town in the world—the Public Library, public indeed, for it is open to any and everybody, and is worthy of the colony to which it belongs. Then come the Court House, the Gaol, and, farther north still, the University and Museum, surrounded with grounds and gardens, pleasantly situate, well attended to, and largely taken advantage of: Hotham, Carlton, Fitzroy, the districts in which these places are to be found are called. Then comes Collingwood, and below that East Melbourne. These places are almost as much Melbourne as the city itself, for the boundary lines are not distinguishable, and the houses and streets run from one to the other without a break. Richmond lies due east of the city, Emerald Hill being directly south, St. Kilda being farther south still; whilst between these places lie Windsor, Prahran, and South Yarra. The river Yarra-Yarra winds from east to west, through the centres of the districts referred to. At, and for a mile or so above Melbourne, the banks of the river are perfectly flat. Eastward, however, the high ground closes somewhat in upon the river, adding greatly to the beauty of the scene. The Botanic Gardens—"The Domain" the ground was called when first laid out—occupies a considerable space on the south bank of the river. All the natural features of the country have been taken

advantage of in order to add to the beauty and character of the gardens. An embankment has been formed along the river, and a handsome lake confined within the boundary of the grounds.

One of the chief features of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens is an immense aviary containing hundreds of strange and rare birds. Among the rarest and strangest of these are reckoned the song birds of England. Larks and thrushes and blackbirds, robins, sparrows, and linnets, are all to be found here, and their new home seems to suit them admirably. Every now and then, as their numbers increase, flocks of them are set at liberty, and English birds are now common in many parts of the colony. Sparrows make themselves quite at home, and are to be met with in large numbers in most of the up-country townships of Victoria.

The river continues to increase in beauty as its course is followed upwards. Gardens and vineyards abound upon its banks; and the surface of the water is shaded by a grove of willows. Three or four miles up it takes a sharp turn and almost doubles on its course. From a bluff headland, near, a scene of marvellous beauty spreads away in every direction. The river itself is broken into mimic falls, and tumbles and tosses over its rugged bottom as brightly and joyously as any river of the Scottish Highlands. Far as the eye can reach, a forest of trees may be seen, until they are lost in the Dandenong and Plenty Ranges. In the heart of the latter, and near the head waters of the Plenty—a considerable tributary of the Yarra—is situate the Yan Yean reservoir. This is an artificial lake, formed for the purpose of supplying Melbourne with water. The embankment by which the waters are enclosed is over three thousand feet long; and, when full, the water covers fully fifteen hundred acres of ground. The water supply is conveyed to Melbourne by means of immense pipes, and such is its power and force at the point of discharge, that in case of fire, it beats down the flames; and, should need arise, the walls of houses could be levelled with the ground by its means. Since the introduction of the Yan Yean into Melbourne, in 1858, there have been very few if any, instances, of fires spreading beyond the buildings in which they have commenced. Before that, the rule was for the whole block to go whenever a fire took place. So plentiful is the supply that a stream of water is always running through the lower lying streets of the town.

For beauty of a quiet rustic kind there are few places in Victoria that can compete with the districts of the Plenty and the Upper Yarra. Quaint, comfortable-looking villages are to be met with in every direction. The

improved lands are, for the most part, in a high state of cultivation, whilst the fruits of the orchards and vineyards are deservedly held in high repute. In Melbourne the produce of these grounds is displayed in a manner worthy of Covent Garden. Many of the residences in the districts are of an exceedingly handsome kind; and, when so placed as to have a background of terraces of ferns and trees, have a wonderfully characteristic effect. The view from Heidelberg conveys a capital idea of the general features of the country.

CHAPTER X.

VICTORIA (*concluded*).

BALLAARAT.—THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.—A POET'S HOME.—DAYLESFORD.—
 STRANGE FLOWERS.—MOUNT FRANKLYN.—CASTLEMAINE.—BENDIGO.—
 HEATHCOTE.—CONCLUSION.

FROM Ballaarat on the south of the dividing range, to Sandhurst on the north, and for a few miles on either side of a line from each of these places to the other, there are several towns of importance, that could not be well described in making a circuit of the colony: Ballaarat itself being the first among them. In consequence of the ratepaying capabilities of its inhabitants (more than £50,000 per annum) it was created a city in 1870. In 1850 it formed portion of a rather valuable sheep run, with a house or hut at intervals of a dozen miles or so. Now the town, or rather the towns—for Ballaarat is divided into East and West—and the country in the immediate vicinity, contain not less than forty thousand inhabitants. The streets, of which there are two hundred miles laid out, are wide and well made, whilst many of its public buildings take equal rank with those of Melbourne. The shops are handsome, the hotels all that could be desired, and the people prosperous. The western town is built upon the sides of the range from which the gold-leads that have made the place famous took their rise. The eastern town is built in the valley at the foot of the hill from which the first gold was obtained. When the discovery was made, gold-digging in Ballaarat was very simple. The precious metal lay on, or immediately under, the surface. As it was traced down the sides of the hills the alluvial drift became deeper, and the bed rock more difficult to get to. From ten, twenty,

and fifty, the sinking has deepened to, in some instances, five hundred feet. The little surface water-courses have run away into sub-basaltic rivers, and to pierce this basalt and gather the golden sands of the pre-historic waters, is the work of the Ballaarat gold-miner of the present day. In order to carry out his work effectually, he has for assistants nearly five hundred steam-engines, bringing to bear upon the work of sinking and pumping and hauling and crushing a force equal to that of ten thousand horses. As a result of all this force and power and industry, Ballaarat is estimated to have contributed to the treasury of the world, gold to the value of forty millions of pounds sterling.

To the east the country around Ballaarat is well wooded, and in some places singularly beautiful and romantic. The Lal-Lal waterfall used to add an element of beauty to the scene; but the water of the swamp by which the falls were fed has been diverted for mining purposes; and the rocks now stand naked and bare, lacking the graceful adjunct for which they were once famous. There are several tolerably large towns round about Ballaarat; but none of them calling for any special mention. Wherever the forests have been cleared, rich loamy soils have been brought under cultivation, and some of the agricultural districts near Ballaarat are among the most prosperous of any in Victoria. The people of Ballaarat are very proud of their golden city and its surroundings. One of them, who has lately written a history of the town, suggests, that over one of its portals there should be inscribed, "*Ut aurum metallorum pretiosissimum, sic tu es camporum aureorum princeps, urbiumque opulentissima.*"

The most direct way of getting from Ballaarat to the towns in the "heart of Victoria," not yet described, is to cross the dividing range by a road running nearly due north to Castlemaine. To the east of this road—and, indeed, to the west of it too; but that part of the country has already been referred to—there lies a district of considerable beauty, and interesting from various associations. The forest country running from Mount Macedon extends to and beyond this point. On the south side of the range—Mount Blackwood, the highest pinnacle of the range is named—the forests round about contain timber, not only magnificent in its proportions, but having a foliage very beautiful in its colouring, form, and outline. The blacks called the range *Wuid Kerruirk*, because of the deep cobalt colour of an isolated peak of the mountain, that lifts its basalt pillar three thousand feet above the level of the sea. The deep dark blue that gathers round this monarch mountain characterises, to some extent, the

whole of the hill-sides; hence they are called the Blue Mountains. The ranges are rugged and precipitous. The district is subject to heavy storms; and when the first gold rush to Mount Blackwood took place, many persons were killed by the giant trees cast down by the force of a hurricane that swept over the district in the night.

The Blue Mountains diggings are situated on the northern face of the range. They have never been of very much importance, and the only dignity they ever achieved was in consequence of the poet R. H. Horne having been appointed by the Government the Mining Registrar of the district. Here, in a slab hut, situate in one of the most out-of-the-way districts of Victoria, Mr. Horne composed his "Prometheus, the Fire-bringer,"—a poem that, together with "Orion" and the "Death of Marlowe" will serve as a perpetual monument to the memory of the writer.

Daylesford is the next town of importance on the line of travel from Ballarat to Bendigo. Mount Franklyn—the "Lar-ne-Barramul," Home of the Emu of the blacks—is not far from here. This mountain, four thousand feet above the level of the sea, and rising up from the plain at its base for over seven hundred feet, is one of the most notable features of the district. Its sides are precipitous, and clothed with handsomely-grown timber and flowering shrubs. On its summit is the basin of an extinct volcano three hundred feet deep. The bottom is a lovely little plot of about fifty acres. It is nearly flat, and is covered here and there by clumps of white gum and Mimosa trees. The whole of the country between this point and the town of Guildford, on the Loddon, and, indeed, in every direction, is of a pleasingly diversified character, and abounds with trees and shrubs of graceful form, and bearing flowers giving a pleasant perfume. Many of these flowers are unknown to the books, and some day will afford a vast field of delight to the botanist and lover of nature. Dr. J. William Mackenna, the physician to the first Governor of Victoria, Sir Charles Hotham, gives the following description of one of these, until then, nondescript beauties. He was walking across "a level plain extending as far as the eye could reach," the surrounding country being of singular beauty. He says:—"I was attracted by a rounded bush, a few feet high, apparently dead and leafless, but having twined about its branches a creeper so thickly interwoven as to supply it with all the greenness and air of a living plant. This creeper in the thinness of its stem, which was equal in every part, and its mode of enlacing itself around its support, much resembled the *Gleichenia neophylla* of New South Wales, as seen in the Kew Gardens; that, however, is a true fern, while this

is a Leguminosa ; the leaves are small, inconspicuous, and pinnated ; and the stem, as just mentioned, little, if at all, thicker at the root than at any other part. It was in full flower, each being a raceme of perfect flowers made up into a cluster, exactly like a bunch of grapes, of a tapering and exquisitely graceful outline, every flower pea-like, of a pale Wisteria hue throughout, but in the centre of the lip or 'eye' lay a drop of so intense a blue that the richest cobalt would have paled before it. The largest cluster was, more or less, four inches long, and as I held it up to receive the admiration which was its due, it struck me that art or nature could not produce a more lovely ornament to grace the head of a queen, than this simple Australian flower. Several bushes so adorned stood about ; but farther on, where the ground became stony and the trees more numerous, they disappeared ; nor was it ever my good fortune to meet with a plant in other parts of Victoria."

The River Loddon rises not far from Daylesford, and winds its way for twenty miles or so through a most picturesque country. Several of its chief feeders spring from the ranges round about also. Spring Creek runs through a very beautiful country. Just below the township of Hepburn it enters a gorge formed on one side by well-wooded and almost perpendicular hills, and on the other by sheer upright rocks, upon the top of which there are long, level, and well-grassed plains. In many places the hill-sides are tunnelled by gold-miners, who adopt this method of work—it was first acted upon by a party of Italians—in preference to sinking through the deep layer of basalt of which the hills are partly formed. Wherever the waters of branch creeks run into the main watercourse the scenery is of a wild and romantic character. Indeed, the whole of the Daylesford and Mount Franklyn country is exceedingly beautiful. Some day Hepburn is likely to become the Leamington or Cheltenham of Victoria ; for, in addition to the natural beauties with which the neighbourhood abounds, there are mineral springs of great medicinal value. The waters of these springs percolate through the mosses and earths of a swamp, within the bounds of which they are confined by a belt of hard sandstone rock ; over this they flow and find their way to the surface of the ground through the cracks and crevices of the strata exposed to the atmosphere. Already these waters have become celebrated. They are packed in iron bottles, and sent to Castlemaine and other towns near, and are by many of the inhabitants substituted for the ordinary soda-water of the hotels.

Down to, and for some distance beyond, the town of Guildford, the Loddon

flows through a country very similar to that already described. The tops of the hills are nearly all composed of rich agricultural soils, gold being obtained from the sub-basaltic drift resting on the old rocks. At Guildford the country becomes more open. The streams that have accumulated on the ranges of Mount Alexander—Forest, Barker's, and Campbell's Creeks, famous in the history of gold digging—join their waters with those of the river. The high land rises on either side of Campbell's Creek sheer upright, as though cleanly cleft by a Titanic knife. Rampart-like, the upper edges of the denuded rocks run along the hill-tops, standing out clear and distinctly defined as a wall of masonry. Below Guildford the Loddon pursues its way for twenty miles or so through similar scenery, and then enters on the plain country that travels towards the Murray.

Castlemaine is situate about eight miles to the north of Guildford, at the junction of Forest and Barker's Creeks. The town is well laid out and handsomely built. It possesses all the accessories and belongings of a prosperous and well-to-do place; but there is nothing in the surrounding country calling for special remark. On the crown of a hill just outside the town a monument of granite has been erected to the memory of the explorer Burke, who was in charge of the police of the district for some years before he started on his glorious journey.

The Melbourne and Murray River Railway makes a considerable detour in order to include Castlemaine within its route. Thence for half-a-dozen miles it runs along the banks of Barker's Creek. On reaching Harcourt, at the foot of Mount Alexander, it takes a sharp turn to the north, and so on to Bendigo, and its terminus at Echuca on the Murray.

Bendigo—Sandhurst is the modern and municipal name of the town—competes, and with perfect propriety, with Ballaarat for the first place among the up-country townships of Victoria. Bendigo is not so large as Ballaarat, nor is it, in appearance, so pretentious. Its main street is called Pall Mall, but the Pall Mall of Sandhurst has scarce a single thing in common with the street of the same name in London. Every building that is not a shop in the Pall Mall at Bendigo is either a bank or a public-house, and all the public-houses are hotels. The country lying between Sandhurst and the Loddon is divided into mining and auriferous lands in pretty nearly equal proportions. For five miles or so round the town evidences of gold-mining meet the eye in all directions. In every gully and on every hill-side steam-engines, and pumps and whims, crushing-machines and puddling-machines, water-dams and reservoirs, are to be met with. From the tops of

some of the hills to the west of the town a hundred steam-engines can be seen, and the whole of them are employed in grinding out gold.

The iron-bark tree—great, strong, giant-like masses of wood and foliage—used to be a prominent feature of the country near Bendigo. The rough-barked, grand old trees have nearly all been cut down to make firewood for the steam-engines, by whose help the gold is got, and nothing remains of the old forests except the stumps, with which a coach or cart now and then comes into collision.

Due north of Bendigo the country spreads out into level plains. To the east lies the Campaspe, upon the banks of which the traders of Bendigo delight to spend their leisure. Some of them have their homes there, too, and more comfortable and pleasant abiding-places no one need desire. The Bendigonians, or citizens of Sandhurst, as they delight to call themselves, greatly affect living in hotels. When the kind of accommodation is taken into consideration, there is little to wonder at in this. The houses are models of comfort, the proprietors of the chief of them have model farms on the banks of the Campaspe, and from these branch establishments there is forwarded every day loads of choice farm and dairy produce for the especial benefit of the boarders in the hotels.

To the south and east of the districts last described there is a highly diversified and, in many places, rich agricultural country, extending to within a few miles of Melbourne. Heathcote is the only place of any importance at the northern extremity of the stretch of country referred to. The town is situate at the foot of one of the southern slopes of Mount Ida. It is as long and straggling as the “lang town o’ Kirkaldy” itself. The mountain and the ranges running from it are very beautiful. There is many a vale among them—

“Lovelier

Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow lodges, midway down,
Hang rich in flowers.”

And when—

“the noonday quiet holds the hills:
The grasshopper is silent in the grass;
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the Cicada sleeps.
The purple flowers droop: the golden bee
Is lily-cradled.”

and the whole scene is filled with a rare and delicate beauty.

Farther south the country still increases in beauty. The dividing range is approached through a narrow valley, having for the most part gentle slopes on either hand. As the mountains are neared the valleys close in, and the scenery becomes more picturesque. By-and-by high precipitous ranges crowd around; but so rich is the soil of the region that the mountain tops are under cultivation, and dense forests have been cleared at great cost, and corn has taken the place of gum-trees. The road from Pyalong to Lancefield lies through a gorge in the dividing range, and when the latter town is reached, a long sweep of rich agricultural land, studded with towns, villages, and homesteads, stretches away to the south. Chief among these on the Sydney road is Kilmore, and on the Mount Alexander road, Kyneton. Both are important towns, having prosperous districts round about them. They are thoroughly English—thoroughly Irish would perhaps be the best term to apply to Kilmore, for most of its early settlers, and many of its present inhabitants, hail from the sister kingdom—in their character, and take high rank among the prosperous places of Australia Felix.

CHAPTER XI.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

LOVE OF NATIVES OF NEW SOUTH WALES FOR SYDNEY.—VICTORIAN ESTIMATION OF MELBOURNE.—THE UNTRAVELLED AUSTRALIAN.—WHERE THE BAD PEOPLE COME FROM.—THE COAST.—SYDNEY HEADS.—PORT JACKSON.—MIDDLE HARBOUR.—WILLOUGHBY FALLS.—VARYING PHASES OF BEAUTY.—THE DEFENCES OF SYDNEY.—A PROPHECY.

A VERY marked and interesting peculiarity distinguishes the people of New South Wales, with reference to the estimation in which they hold the metropolis of their colony, from the colonists of Victoria. The Victorian pins his faith in and upon the town or district in which he lives. The Geelongese has a fixed and firm belief in the superiority of the "Pivot" over the capital. In his eyes the waters of Corio are far better adapted for the purposes of a harbour than are those of Hobson's Bay. The streets of his favourite city he believes to be handsomer, the public buildings more magnificent, the places of business more spacious, the men braver and the women fairer, the trees, the flowers, the shrubs more beautiful to look upon, the hills

and valleys more productive, the air clearer, the water purer, and everything in and around it better in every respect than anything pertaining to the metropolis. Indeed, ships and trade and numbers of people notwithstanding, a real, thorough out-and-out citizen of Geelong looks upon his city, and not upon Melbourne, as the capital of Victoria.

So, in degree, with various other towns in that colony. He would be a bold man who on Ballarat would compare, unfavourably, the "mining metropolis" with the commercial centre "down the country," and a social taboo would attach itself to any one who in a moment of inadvertance spoke of Bendigo, Beechworth, or Castlemaine as being comparable to Ballarat. These latter towns fully return the compliment. Castlemaine is the "great centre." Beechworth the "metropolis of the north." Bendigo is Bendigo pure and simple, although officials and authorities, map-makers and geographers, will persist in calling it Sandhurst; and, as Bendigo, is equal if not superior to any and every other place, whether in Victoria or out of it. Each of these towns possess a parliament of its own, infinitely superior, in the estimation of the inhabitants, to the "talking shop" in Melbourne. That they have not a custom-house within their borders is due entirely to the petty jealousy of the metropolitan merchants; whilst their being deprived of local courts of bankruptcy is a wrong inflicted upon them, and cherished with the keenest and most determined obstinacy. Every up-country town in Victoria is superior to any other, and all of them better than Melbourne. That the feeling is not altogether wrong is evident by the decentralising process that has been going on for some years, very much to the benefit of the up-country districts.

There is little, if any, of this feeling in the minds of the people of New South Wales. Sydney is the common object of their pride and their affection. Wherever a New South Wales man is found, he proclaims himself to be a "Sydney native." Other people may call them "Cornstalks" or "Gum-suckers" if they will. They are proud of the names. But, wherever born, whether on the Paramatta River, among the Blue Mountains, on the tablelands of Manero, at Bathurst or Gundagai, on the Murrumbidgee, the Lachlan, or the Edward, amid the coal-pits of Newcastle, or the out-of-the-way places farther north, they are all "Sydney natives," and, to the wanderer from home, the "Sydney side" is always the land of promise to which some day it will be his greatest privilege to return. To many of them New South Wales is a name merely, to which they attach a very vague meaning; but Sydney, or the "Sydney side" is their home, and they regard it with a strong and enduring affection.

This feeling was once curiously indicated soon after the discovery of gold in Victoria had attracted pilgrims from all lands to the shores of Hobson's Bay. Government appointments were plentiful in those days, and a motley multitude of men flocked into Melbourne in search of them. A number of the appointed ones were assembled round the camp mess-table one evening, when the conversation turned on the various cities and countries visited by members of the party—London and Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, Naples, Rome. These places, and a hundred others, were referred to and described with all that imaginative power for which travellers are famous. One of the party was a native-born Australian. He had led a student's life at the University of Sydney, and had never been a hundred miles away from that city until the patronage he had at command provided him with a valuable appointment in the new district. He listened with deep interest to all that was said, partook of the enthusiasm manifested by the various speakers, and evidently enjoyed the mental panorama spread before him. One of those present had been describing Naples, and dwelt with a keen delight on the beauties of the place. The bay, Santa Lucia, the mountains beyond, and the city itself were all told of in glowing terms. The Australian was enchanted, he listened breathlessly, and as the description closed, threw himself back upon his seat with a deep sigh of keen appreciation; then looking round upon the company, half in admiration, half in pity, said, "Ah! but did you ever see Sydney?"

This lover of his native southern city—a man now in the prime of life—still occupies an important official position in the colony of Victoria. Since his early days he has more than once enjoyed the usual "leave of absence" dear to the official heart, and made the grand tour of the world; but it is doubtful whether all the beautiful places he has since seen has lessened his admiration for the "Queen City" of the Pacific and the country in its neighbourhood.

Another story, not so much indicating that keen love and appreciation of Sydney to which allusion has been made, as an innate sense of the inferiority of other countries, is told of the daughter of a Scottish nobleman, who had emigrated to New South Wales in early life; married there, and surrounded himself with a family of sons and daughters. When his children were growing up, the system of assigning convicts to squatters as servants was in force. The family had been brought up with all the care and attention to their moral, social, and physical good that almost invariably characterises the conduct of Australian parents towards their children. In the present case

all the graces of a refined and highly-bred family circle had been superadded. The boys and the girls had grown up into gentlemen and gentlewomen. Once a visitor from Europe had helped to make the out-of-the-way station more gay than usual. On his visit terminating, he said to the eldest daughter: "Yours is doubtless a delightful life; you have a pleasant home, live in a beautiful country, are surrounded by kind and happy friends; you get your boxes of books from time to time, and seem to enjoy them almost as much as you do your gallops through the bush, or the pleasant evenings at home, when you are all gathered together. But do you not sometimes feel a desire to visit England?" "England!" she said,—it must be remembered that her parents were Scotch, and that, as is not uncommon with Scotch folk abroad, they were proud of Scotland, and her everyday notions of Englishmen were derived from her very limited knowledge of the convict servants on her father's station—"England! no; I should not care to go to England; for that's where all the bad people come from!"

The experiences of the last twenty years have tended to do away with very much of the feeling expressed by this young Australian lady; but time has not diminished the beauties of the "Sydney side," and the love of its people for the country is as great as ever. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the country is very beautiful, and nearly all that is pleasing, home-like, and affectionate in old country habits and manners have been conserved and cared for in New South Wales.

The first journeyers along the shores of the south-eastern coasts of Australia must have gazed long and anxiously on the high wall of cliff with which the land is, nearly throughout its whole extent, outlined. From Cape Howe to Port Jackson, and far away to the north beyond, there is scarcely a break in the line of rock, or, at any rate, there are only such indentations as are not apparent save to persons sailing close in shore. After Cape Howe is left a few miles behind, the level lands of the coast are almost entirely without trees, and from the sea the country presents anything but an inviting aspect. The entrance to Port Jackson itself would even now be scarcely perceptible save for the lighthouses erected on the north and south heads of the port. The navigation is comparatively easy, however, and ships that have traversed more than half a world of water steer boldly for the high bluff rocks, and, leaving the "league-long roller" of the Pacific behind, float between the ramparts—like walls of vari-coloured sandstone,—into the still waters of one of the most beautiful bays in the world.

The heads of Port Jackson are sure to attract the attention of visitors

on reaching New South Wales. As they are neared they seem to frown and look dangerous, and indeed they have proved so more than once, but always under exceptional circumstances. When the entrance is gained, a sense of security is felt. Although the heads are a mile apart, they appear to those on board ship to be sufficiently near to be dangerous. The weather-worn strata of sandstone shows so clearly through the bright southern air, that the numberless colourings of their sides can be seen quite plainly, and it almost looks as though a stone could be thrown from the deck to either shore. So sheer upright do the rocks rise, that the idea of a massive doorway leading to some gigantic castle immediately presents itself to the mind of the spectator. Perfect peace and quiet is, however, the first feeling of the new arrival. The rocks sink as straight down beneath the waters as they rise above it, and a perfect stillness prevails upon the surface. Very soon the open waters of the bay proper are reached, and the mixed feelings produced by the circumstances of the entrance are changed to one sensation of entire delight. No words can describe the beauty of the scene, and every hundred yards of the journey up the bay discloses fresh charms.

The beauty of the place seizes at once upon the imagination. On every side of the bay "bits" that an artist would delight in present themselves. Quaintly-formed headlands run out from the shore into the water, each enclosing estuary models of the bay itself.

Immediately behind the north head of Port Jackson, Middle Harbour opens to view. On its eastern shore there nestles the pleasant little village, or rather suburb, of Manly Beach. For a couple of miles or so the Middle Harbour runs in a north-westerly direction. Throughout the whole of this distance the scenery may be described as beautiful, but not grand. The banks slope away from the margin of the water with a certain charm of outline of a homely character, and the place is very dear to the holiday-makers and pleasure-seekers of Sydney. The shore and country beyond is sparsely timbered, and the little valleys met with here and there seem specially adapted for carrying out to perfection that favourite idea of Australian enjoyment, a picnic. Very suddenly, however, all this is changed. A long sandy spit runs out into the bay, narrowing the navigable water-way to a width of not more than twenty or thirty yards. The course of the water turns to the westward, and in a short time assumes the appearance of an inland lake rather than an arm of the great Pacific. The pleasant pastoral-looking shores are changed for rugged cliffs and disorderly-placed masses of time-worn sandstone. Away overhead these quaintly-placed and unformed

blocks, the result of a physical disturbance of long ago, tower one over the other, seeming as though they had been thus insecurely perched so as to be in readiness for some other unexpected change of position. In many instances they overlay the surface of the water, and cast into its depths fantastic shapes and shadows that recall the "round towers of earlier days," and the magic fancies of the lakes of Ireland. Trees, rugged and gnarled and old-world looking, spring from the interstices between the rocks. Wherever the slow-falling bark and leaves of the Eucalyptus have found a resting-place, and in the course of years formed a soil, there spring delicately shaped and sweet-smelling flowering shrubs, adding a dainty grace of their own to a scene that might otherwise appear rugged and almost ugly.

Thus for half a dozen miles or so the water of the Middle Harbour takes its way through an ever-varying, though always wild and picturesque gorge. At its head the most beautiful scene met with on its whole course presents itself. Over a sharply-defined and perpendicular wall of rock the Willoughby Falls descend. The first fall is a sheer leap, that scarcely causes a break on the face of the water. The water is precipitated into a basin hollowed out of, or rather between, the rocks by its own action, and then commences a journey of turbulent joyousness over a broken surface, whose every indentation makes a noise that mingles with the melancholy rustle of the trees, sending forth a sound that seems almost tangible to the touch. Save among the mountains in which the waters of the Murray rise, there are few scenes in Australia of so sublime a beauty as that around the Willoughby Falls. Some of the mountain scenes of the Australian continent are grander, because of the extent of country included within the view, yet few of them have more of the elements of real beauty in scenery so easily comprehended by the spectator. As the crow flies, these falls are not more than three miles from Sydney, and they are therefore the constant resort of people in search of enjoyment in the midst of beautiful scenery. One of the greatest attractions possessed by the waters of the Inner Harbour is the sport they afford to the fishermen, who find their craving fully satisfied there.

Leaving the Middle Harbour, and following the course of Port Jackson towards the city of Sydney, every succeeding opening discloses fresh beauties. The shore winds in and out, forming fairy-like bays, at the mouth of each of which there stands an island, repeating on a smaller scale the beauties of the shore beyond. These islands have almost the appearance of gardens placed on the bosom of the waters. They are for the most part

tolerably well wooded, although the timber takes the shape of shrubs rather than trees. Everything, indeed, on and about the shores of Port Jackson appears as though each had been made for each. In some cases the coast rises almost perpendicularly from a comparatively narrow beach. This circumstance has not prevented some of the citizens of Sydney from taking advantage of the natural beauties of the bay. As viewed from the water, some of the houses seem as though built into the face of the rock. The gardens surrounding them have more the appearance of the hanging pleasure-grounds of Babylon than anything else to which they can be compared. To the stranger these "dwellings in the rock" look as though they were unapproachable from the world above, below, or beyond; yet money, judiciously expended, has made access easy to the whole of them.

It would not be easy to say whether Port Jackson looks its best by night or by day. In the daylight the surrounding coasts stand out clear and well-defined against the blue Australian sky, and all the subtle and minute phases of loveliness derivable from harmony of outline, delicacy of colouring, and variety of form are easily distinguishable and appreciated. The ships lying at anchor, the numerous yachts and pleasure-boats, the fishers, the rocks, the dales, the dells, the lights and shadows of the land and water, the life and bustle of the port, the sounds that distance softens, and the sights that novelty makes attractive; all these things join to make Port Jackson a scene of beauty, the remembrance of which no after time can wholly do away with. At night it has an indescribable beauty of its own too. In Australia, the stars appear to hang pendulous from, and not merely rest in, the sky. The constellations look like tangible realities that a man might touch, rather than far-off gems of light that can only be looked at. Some of the planets, as they sink towards the horizon, cast long lines of light across the waters of the bay, that make a glimmer, as it strikes upon the islands and the coasts, very strange and beautiful to look upon. The lights of the shipping, of the houses and villages, the glinting of the starlight over the edges of the rocks, the profound hush and quiet, broken only by the notes of a night-bird, the dip of an oar, or the cutting of a belated keel through the waters—all these things together, make it a difficult matter to say whether the bay is the more lovely by day or by night.

The appearance of the city itself, as seen from the bay, is scarcely less strange and wonderful in its beauty. Sydney is built on no less than five of the small bays, or rather upon the necks of land that jut out from each towards the bay itself. Before the ordinary anchorage is reached, a strange,

low-lying rock, covered with massive stonework, is passed. It bears a name that, taken in connection with the circumstances of the early days of the colony, is strongly significant of the evils that then existed, and of the terrible means taken to visit with punishment the evil-doer. Now it is strongly fortified, and should the Australian colonies have to defend themselves, or be defended by the mother country, would doubtless give a good account of itself.

The entrance to the port of Sydney proper is also fortified. The massive stone structure shown in the illustration is Fort Macquarie, the viceregal residence rising behind. On the other side of Sydney Cove, Dawes' Battery is erected, on a point bearing the same name, and in the bight between these two points the harbour of Sydney is situate. On the west the city is bounded by Darling Harbour, and on the east by the Government domain and the suburb of Woolloomooloo. Above and around all these points the beauty of the scenery is of a very striking character, and there is little to wonder at in Governor Phillip selecting the position upon which Sydney now stands as a site for the new settlement he had been appointed to make. The engraving of the Tank stream conveys a capital idea of the country as it existed in the early days. The first Governor of the colony appears to have had the power of impressing the readers of his reports with a keen appreciation of the beauty and the future fortune in store for the new country in which his lot had been cast. To one of the earliest editions of the history of the voyage to the settlement of New South Wales, Darwin, the author of the "Botanic Garden," attached the following lines. Read by the light of the years that have passed away, they appear little less than prophetic:—

"Where Sydney Cove her lucid bosom swells,
Courts her young navies and the storm repels,
High on a rock amid the troubled air,
Hore stood sublime and waved her golden hair;
Calmed with her rosy smile the tossing deep,
And with sweet accents charmed the winds to sleep;
To each wild plain she stretched her snowy hand,
High-waving wood, and sea-encircled strand.
'Hear me,' she cried, 'ye rising realms record
Time's openings scenes, and Truth's unerring word.
There shall broad streets their stately walls extend,
The circus widen and the crescent bend;
There, rayed from cities o'er the cultured land,
Shall bright canals and solid roads expand.
There the proud arch, colossus-like, bestride
Yon glittering streams, and bound the chasing tide;
Embellished villas crown the landscape scene,
Farms wave with gold and orchards blush between;
There shall tall spires and dome-capt towers ascend,
And piers and quays their massy structures blend;

While with each breeze approaching vessels glide,
 And northern treasures dance on every tide!
 Then ceased the nymph—tumultuous echoes roar,
 And joy's loud voice was heard from shore to shore.
 Her graceful steps descending pressed the plain,
 And PEACE and ART and LABOUR joined her train."

CHAPTER XII.

NEW SOUTH WALES (*continued*).

THE TANK STREAM.—THE FIRST THEATRE.—THE BEGINNING.—THE PROGRESS.
 —OLD PICTURES AND NEW ONES.—FIRST IMPRESSIONS.—THE ANTIQUITY
 OF SYDNEY.—ITS PRESENT ASPECT.

"A FINE run of fresh water, stealing silently through a thick wood." In these terms the chief inducement for the settlement of the members of the expedition of 1788 upon the shores of Sydney Cove is expressed. The band of colonists and convicts that the English Government had selected to people the new south land left England on the 13th of May, 1787, and after a weary voyage, on the third day of the next year, the coast lands of Australia were sighted. A fortnight afterwards the *Supply*, having on board Captain Phillip, entered Botany Bay, and by the 20th of the same month the remainder of the other ships of the squadron were safely anchored in the same haven. The history of the landing, as given by Captain Phillip, is most interesting, but too long and too well-known to be accorded a place here. Within a week after the arrival of the fleet, the decision to abandon Botany Bay as a place of settlement was arrived at. The chief reason for the abandonment was the want of fresh water. There were, indeed, "several rivers of fresh water found in different parts of the bay; but there did not appear to be any situation to which there was not some very strong objection." Captain Cook had already informed the world as to the whereabouts of Port Jackson, and Captain Phillip at once availed himself of the knowledge. After a very short examination, the removal of the settlement to Port Jackson was decided upon, the sandy soil and rock of Sydney Cove, together with the "run of fresh water stealing silently through a thick wood," furnishing chief reasons for the removal. The history of the failure of the settlement at Botany Bay, and of the success at Port Jackson, is every where and there connected with the story of the Tank Stream, and the latest results are singularly in opposition to the first causes. For forty years the people of Sydney

were content to depend for their water supply upon the Tank Stream, with a well sunk here and there. For a long time the supply was amply sufficient. The stream was dammed up at various places, and for many years the trees that shaded the waters of the creek were allowed to stand. As time wore on, however, and the population increased, many of the trees were cut down, and the supply of water was at once diminished, the demand, on the contrary, increasing every day. In 1827 the swamps at Botany Bay were surveyed, and it was determined to construct reservoirs and cut a tunnel twelve thousand feet long for the conveyance of the water to Sydney. It took ten years to complete the work, the whole of which was done by convict labour, at a cost of something over £22,000. A dozen years ago these works were further supplemented by the construction of a reservoir at Sydney; and now the famous Tank Stream is a name only, and a name held in not very good odour.

Barrington, the pickpocket, was one of the "bad bargains" sent from England to Australia. He wrote one of the earliest histories of the colony. Speaking of the landing of the party under the command of Captain Phillip, he says, "They stepped from the boat into a wood." Barrington himself has drawn one of the most speaking likenesses of the class of which he was a member, and who at the beginning of the settlement formed fully two-thirds of the population of Sydney. Leave to open a theatre was given to "some of the well-behaved convicts" in the January of 1796. Barrington was one of the players, and wrote a prologue for the opening performance. He himself modestly refers to it as being "particularly descriptive of the theatrical corps." It will be seen that more than one of Barrington's lines have passed into "household words:"—

"From distant climes, o'er widspread seas we come,
Though not with much *clat* or beat of drum;
True patriots all, for be it understood,
We left our country for our country's good;
No private views disgraced our generous zeal,
What urged our travels was our country's weal.
But, you inquire, what could our hearts inflame
With this now passion for theatric fame?
What in the practice of our former days
Could shape our talent to exhibit plays?
Your patience, sirs, some observations made,
You'll grant us equal to the scenic trade.
He, who to midnight ladders is no stranger,
You'll own will make an admirable Ranger.
To seek Macheath we have not far to roam,
And sure in Filch I shall be quite at home.
Unrivalled, there, none will dispute my claim,
To high pre-eminence, and exalted fame.

As oft on Gadshill we have ta'en our stand,
 When 'twas so dark you could not see your hand,
 Some true-bred Falstaff we may hope to start
 Who, when well bolstered, well will play his part.
 The scene to vary we shall try in time,
 To treat you with a little pantomime.
 Here light and easy columbines are found,
 And well-tried harlequins with us abound.
 From durance vile our precious selves to keep,
 We often had recourse to th' flying leap;
 To a black face have sometimes owed escape,
 And Hounslow Heath has proved the worth of crap.
 But how, you ask, can we e'er hope to soar
 Above these scenes, and rise to tragic lore?
 Too oft, alas! we've forced th' unwilling tear,
 And petrified the heart with real fear.
 Macbeth, a harvest of applause will reap,
 For some of us, I fear, have 'murdered sleep.'
 His lady, too, with grace will sleep and talk!
 Our females have been used at night to walk.
 Sometimes, indeed, so various is our art,
 An actor may improve and mend his part:
 'Give me a horse!' bawls Richard like a drone,
 We'll find a man would help himself to one.
 Grant us your favour, put us to the test,
 To gain your smiles we'll do our very best;
 And, without dread of future turnkey Lockitts,
 Thus, in an honest way, still pick your pockets."

All the bad characters of the community were evidently not included in the cast at the theatre, for Barrington says, "Contrary to the practice of robbing at the theatre, they visited it only to see whose house they might plunder while they were at the play."

The first years of the new settlement were rugged enough, and the story of the times is a sad one. Very many of the convicts were men who had been transported for crimes that are nowadays punished with comparatively lenient sentences—the poacher among them. Some of these men would, and, indeed, did, make industrious and valuable colonists. Others, however, were deeply sunk in iniquity, and with few exceptions they were densely ignorant. Many of those sent in charge of them were little better than the convicts themselves, and a tyrannical cruelty characterised very much of the management of the new settlement. Robberies and attempts to escape were not unfrequent, and the punishment upon discovery severe. On several occasions want of food threatened to bring other evils in its train; but, on the whole, the place struggled on with as great an amount of success as could have been expected from the materials of which it had been composed. At the first stock-taking of the colony, these materials were found to consist

of 1,030 men, women, and children, five head of cattle, half-a-dozen horses, a score of goats, 29 sheep, 74 pigs, a dozen and a half of turkeys, some geese and fowls. There was some seed wheat on hand, and the clergyman who had accompanied the expedition—that luxury had been forced upon the authorities by the representations and influence of William Wilberforce—had, when in the port of Rio de Janeiro, the foresight to obtain some orange seeds. These had been sown, and the young plants looked strong and healthy. Such were the modest beginnings of the colony of New South Wales. It does not enter within the province of this work to trace the intervening history, the details of which are, however, full of interest and instruction. The proportions to which the colony has grown may, however, be glanced at.

First of all, New South Wales has a population of 502,000. Churches and chapels of every denomination abound all over the colony, the Anglican Church and the Roman Catholic Church being divided into five dioceses each. The education of the people is assured by a university, having two colleges affiliated thereto, by over 800 public schools, 1,100 teachers being employed in the instruction of 60,000 children. There are also a large number of private scholastic establishments, some of them taking a high position in the educational world, and nearly every town has its mechanics' or scientific institute and reading-room. In Sydney, there is a capital free public library and a school of arts. Municipal institutions flourish all over the country, there being no less than forty municipalities established.

The increase in the natural wealth of the colony has been equally satisfactory. In 1870 there were fully 400,000 acres of ground cropped with various kinds of grain, 4,000 acres of land were occupied by vineyards, whilst the gardens and orchards covered nearly 16,000 acres of land. The live stock had increased to 280,000 head of horses, 1,800,000 of horned cattle, over 16,200,000 of sheep, and nearly 200,000 pigs. Although these figures are large, they convey a very inadequate idea of the actual increase of the stock of the colony, for a very large proportion of the flocks and herds of Victoria, Queensland, and Northern Australia has been derived from New South Wales. The entire live stock of the Australian colonies is estimated at 640,000 horses, 3,900,000 head of cattle, 46,812,850 sheep, and 600,000 pigs.

Although the increase of property, and the consequent prosperity of the colony as indicated by these numbers, strike the reader with peculiar force, the change in Sydney itself is no less wonderful. The quaint wood-cuts with

which the early histories of Australia are illustrated, though defective as works of art, are doubtless true representations of the place as it existed in the latter years of 1700. One of the illustrations to Barrington's history, published in London, is evidently a faithful picture of Sydney Cove. The outlines of the country are admirably given. Two ships are lying by the point to which the circular quay now extends. The shores of Darling Harbour, now covered with wharfs and quays and shipbuilding yards, have not a single house upon them. The wooden houses of the town proper are not more than forty in number, and when the sketch was taken cultivation had evidently not been commenced. Another picture shows Garden Island and Bay, with a single house in one of the valleys of the mainland. An east view of Sydney shows a comfortable enough looking farm-house, with some huts and barns scattered about. A field of flourishing wheat fills the half-distance of the picture, whilst numerous patches of cultivation are to be seen round about. As a set-off to the look of comfort and prosperity of these things, the foreground of the sketch has for its live elements the owner of the comfortable homestead undergoing the operation of spearing by one of the natives. A south view of Sydney, in the same volume, is a scene entirely pleasing. The houses are still only sparsely scattered about on the side of the hill. A native is lazily fishing from a boat; the cultivation paddock has got a substantial fence round it, cows are quietly grazing by the sea-shore, whilst the milk-maid is being made love to by one who, without any very great stretch of imagination, might be taken, or mistaken, for the "man with the coat all tattered and torn." There is nothing, however, "forlorn"-looking about the maiden; and priests, whether "shaven and shorn" or otherwise, were then unknown in New South Wales.

All these pictures have a good deal of the "willow-pattern plate" fashion about them in the way of perspective and drawing, but indicate with almost perfect accuracy the state of things in the colony in the year 1800. When compared with the illustrations of the present volume, they show more distinctly the progress made by the country than any words or figures of speech could do.

Now the waters of Port Jackson receive the ships of every clime. A fleet of graceful yachts may always be seen either lying at anchor or skimming over the surface of the bay; for the "Sydneyite" takes as much pride in his sailing-boat as the up-country Sydney native does in his riding-horse. A forest of masts run round the inner circle of the harbour, whilst the estuary on the west stretches away the whole length of the city, filled and bounded by

the indications of a widespread industry and an almost universal commerce. The feelings of a stranger landing for the first time in Sydney are of a mixed and not easily definable character. By the time Sydney Cove is reached, the ever-varying beauty of the bay will, in all probability, have produced a subdued though intense feeling of quiet enjoyment. The excitement of reaching a long-sought port will have begun to wear off so soon as the Heads have been passed, and a feeling of entire safety take possession of the mind. Expectancy has been lost in the fulness of the unexpected fruition of loveliness with which the wanderer is greeted. Nothing seems strange, though everything is new. Nature when seen under such aspects as those she assumes at Port Jackson has this effect, and the fulness of the enjoyment swallows up every feeling of anxiety, whether of hope or fear. The landing once effected, this feeling is exchanged for one of puzzled wonder. The shops and houses and streets have an English, almost an "Old English," look about them. The roads are narrow, though well formed and kept. The houses are for the most part perfectly plain, and pierced with the orthodox "guillotine" window. It seems a sin to use them in a land of such bright sunshine. For the most part, the people have as thoroughly an English look about them as the places themselves. Their clothes are cut, if not made, in English fashion, and their speech is unmistakably British. They walk the streets with a look less heavy and absorbed than may be seen on the faces of men in the mercantile centres of Europe it is true, though at the first introduction, somewhat of reserve characterises the intercourse of the people of Sydney with strangers. This, however, wears off, and then nothing can be more hearty than their friendliness. Once a Sydney native is perfectly *en rapport* with his visitors, his kindness is unlimited and his friendship genuine. He is shrewd, business-like, and, when at work, hard-working, as becomes a citizen of the "Queen City of the South;" but in his manners and habits kindly, and in his honest simplicity almost childlike.

The easiest mode of finding the way to the heart of a resident of Sydney is to feel and express admiration for his home and its beautiful surroundings. This is the strongest sentiment—weakness, some folk call it—of the native of Sydney, and a well-founded feeling it is. He desires no blind admiration, however. He will take his visitor through the Domain and to "Lady Macquarie's chair," then, with the beautiful bay, and, if possible, still more beautiful islands, stretched out before them, will wait, with a quiet and contented faith, whilst his newly-arrived friend fills himself with beauty. Using a scarcely perceptible motion, he may indicate the charms of Garden Island

close by, or the more distant Darling Point, with its handsome houses, and gardens that look as though they hang from the edges of the rocks. If more than usually communicative, he may tell of the road that runs overhead, skirting the coast of Rose Bay, and affording to the traveller a view of the waters of Port Jackson on one side and of the Pacific on the other, until, at the end, the whole glory of the ocean is revealed. As a rule, however, he will leave the influence of the scene to do its own work, and the man who fails to be impressed thereby must be strangely wanting in a sense of the beautiful.

The view having sufficiently impressed itself upon the visitor, the wise guide will turn his back upon the waters of the bay and follow the walk, named after Lady Macquarie, to the southward. Skirting Farm Cove, he will enter the gardens of the Domain. Should the visitor be a new arrival from Europe, the effect of these gardens upon him will be of an intense though not easily described character. On the side of the grounds nearest the bay, Nature has been left pretty much to herself, and a glorious work she has effected. The gardens are one mass of luxuriant vegetation. Tropical and semi-tropical shrubs and trees appear to have planted themselves in the positions best adapted to their nature and for the display of their beauty. To the left as the visitor returns to the town, the grounds may be almost termed wild and uncultivated; but towards the top, in the ordinary Botanic Gardens, artificial arrangement is perceptible; but not all the art of man can destroy, or indeed affect much, the beauty of the place. A statue of Sir Richard Bourke, by Westmacott, strongly recalls thoughts of the old world in this charming corner of the new.

Not long, however, will the Sydney native linger here. His great pride is in the bay; nor does he desire to elicit an opinion until the object of his admiration has been seen from all its most prominent points of view. The town is passed through rapidly enough and the shores of Darling Harbour reached. The scene is beautiful as ever, but its surroundings are of a somewhat different character to those already seen. Here the steamships trading to Sydney from various parts of the world have their resting places. Ships are built upon the shores of the harbour, and all the appliances and signs of a busy population are to be found in abundance. Ships are being perpetually built here, and the sound of hammers only cease, and often not even then, when night has fallen. At night the scene is indeed full of life and beauty. From Balmain a thousand lights shine, whilst the various points and bays beyond send forth subdued sounds, telling of pleasant homes and

abiding-places. The sketches of Sydney Cove, Goat Island, the Quarantine Ground, the Tank Stream, and others, will give the reader as vivid an idea of the country immediately around Sydney as anything short of a personal visit could afford. When all these beauties have been seen, then comes the opportunity of the citizen of Sydney. With a look of quiet and contented triumph, that takes in at once all the beauties of the place, as well as the varied emotions indicated by the expression of his friend's features, he will ask, "What do you think of that?" He waits for no reply, for he has made up his mind on the subject long ago, and the idea of any one differing with him has never entered into his head. Nor would it be easy not to join him in his admiration of the place. Nearly every element of natural beauty is gathered together in and around Port Jackson. The outline of the coast is a perpetual variation of beautiful forms. The waters of the bay shine and shimmer by night and day, filled with the lights and shades that rocks and hills, the waving of trees, and the ever-varying charm that tributary streams afford to quiet lakes and land-locked bays, are seen here in perfection. Art has aided without supplanting nature. Mansions are toned down by massive rocks; elaborately-kept gardens subdued by the lush exuberance of nature; the sounds of man chastened by the sounding quiet of the streams and trees; and all these things, acting and reacting one upon the other, compose a picture of exquisite, because of ever-varying, beauty.

The stranger landing in Sydney, having leisure on his hands, and left to himself, would, in all probability, be led into different scenes, and experience different sensations than those referred to. Leaving the circular quay by the first outlet that presented itself, he would, in all likelihood, be struck with the strange, rather than the homely, elements of the scene that met his view. By the route indicated it takes very few minutes to lose the "waterside" part of Sydney. All the evidence of a seaport abound nevertheless. "Old curiosity shops"—not those of Wardour Street and "Little Nell," but rather of Wapping and the wharves—are met with at every turn; strange things abound, and strange people are by no means rare. Kanakas wander up and down, their eyes rolling from side to side, and taking in all the strangeness of the new country. Big, brawny Maories pass to and fro in groups, seemingly unconcerned, but every now and then grunting out a remark not always complimentary to the Pakeha. Eurasians, got up in a style that a *petite crème* of Paris,—before Paris suffered its downfall,—might envy, stroll to and fro, exhibiting the brightest boots, the best-fitting coats, and the whitest shirt-cuffs and collars in the world. As a rule, these may be set down as stewards

and cabin servants on board the steamers trading to the port. Groups of Chinamen are sure to attract attention, whilst here and there men from Manila, Singapore, and the numberless islands of the Straits, will be met with. Some, indeed most, of these have some gay-coloured appanage to their clothes; two or three kerchiefs of a brilliant hue; the head-dress nearly always strange, and sometimes grotesque. Never does it appear more *outré* than when the "bell-topper" of civilised life crowns the strange conglomeration comprising the varied covering of the body. Strange and un-English as many of the groups look, there is rarely anything in the conduct of those comprising them to call for remark from the European. Up and down the streets they go, intently absorbed by their own concerns, or the strange sights which every now and then present themselves. The European portion of the passing population of Sydney are scarcely less strange in their manner and appearance to an orthodox Englishman than are the Kanakas, or Maories, or Eurasians that are met with at every few paces. The "genuine old salt" may be seen here in perfection. The tobacco-chewing, round-hat-wearing, gait-rolling, broad-at-bottom-trouserred, sunburnt sons of the sea, of whom Dibdin sang, and the loss of whom old world folk sometimes lament, are not unfrequently met with in the lower parts of Pitt Street and the places thereabouts. As a rule these men are whalers, or they have been. They remember when the Bay of Islands was a money-making place, and when it was worth while running into Sydney now and then for the purpose of spending what they had made. There are not many of these left, but they are sufficiently numerous still to give a flavour of the "old salt" to the new generation.

These men are rarely to be seen, however, save down by the waterside. As the city is followed towards the south, and indeed towards the east and the west also, a different kind of life is observable. Passing up Pitt Street, and through and across the streets that run parallel with and at right angles to it, all the evidences of a settled and highly cultivated state of life are observable. The shops and places of business generally have a modest and well-to-do look about them. There is less of the "selling-off" element perceptible than prevails with the majority of Melbourne *magazins de luxe*. There is, as it were, a better "tone" observable—about the upper class of society at any rate—less of pretension of appearance, less fuss, and perhaps more dignity; something like the difference between a tolerably lively cathedral city—Exeter or Gloucester for instance—and one of the bustling manufacturing towns of the north of England. Melbourne people call the

Sydneyites slow. Sydney repays the compliment, but uses stronger, if not more expressive, language.

George Street and Pitt Street are the main thoroughfares of Sydney. They run parallel together for nearly the whole length of the city; and although not so long, and considerably nearer each other, may be taken to represent Oxford Street—east of the Circus—and Holborn, in connection with the Strand and Fleet Street. The irregular formation of the waterside portions of Sydney made it impossible to give to the streets that stiff, right-angled rigidity that characterises nearly every other city of the Australian continent. If fashionable or business notions have been outraged thereby, beauty has gained—that is after a certain grave, quaint fashion—immensely. Even in the main thoroughfares there are many incongruous projections, queer corners, out-of-the-way dips and bends—not the Grecian bend by any means—yawning gateways leading to nowhere, and admirably adapted for the bewilderment of strangers; old-fashioned hostelrys, with passages and bar parlours that would delight the heart of a commercial traveller of the old-fashioned sort; and, every now and then, a funny little narrow street developing itself in a manner that can only be accounted for by the fact that Sydney is at the other side of the world, and that therefore things are upside down. One, if not more, of these latter streets has been cut right through the heart of the solid rock, which rising rampart-like on either side promises a sheer fall of thirty feet or so to any unlucky wight who may chance to step over the boundary line of the roadway above. These cuttings impress a stranger after a somewhat peculiar fashion. He is immediately led to think that the public authorities, having tried to lay out their streets in conformity with the principles of orthodox ugliness, had hewn out streets where streets should never have been, and this for the purpose of asserting a principle of antagonism to nature. Practical people, however, may give a different reason for the chasm cut into the rock. The shores of Darling Harbour are quite as important now as were the sides of Circular Quay some years ago; and as constant communication has to be kept up between the two bays, it is cheaper to draw loads of merchandise and machinery over a level road instead of up a hill.

It is, however, out of the actual line of busy trade that the real quaintness of Sydney must be looked for. To the east of the chief thoroughfares, and running down towards the water, the streets take many erratic turnings. In these out-of-the-way corners the houses affect an isolation one from the other indicative of plenty of elbow room at the time of their building. Most of

them rejoice in trimly-kept forecourts, and back gardens are the rule. Every now and then the wanderer is startled, or at any rate surprised, by coming upon a clump of English oak-trees. Young they are, it is true, but with such a look of home about them! Some of these children of the old home forests grow out in the open, that is, wherever a space larger than usual exists at the junction or the intersection of streets. No harm is ever done to them. An English squire would as soon think of destroying his rookery as a Sydney native of injuring a leaf of the oak-trees that grow in the streets and gardens of his favourite city. There they stand, open and unprotected save by the almost reverential feelings with which they are regarded, ever-abiding memorials of the dear old land that every Australian calls, with an ever-increasing affection, "Home." They call it so, not because their home of to-day is not a pleasant and a happy one, but because of their own memories and the tradition of their fathers. In this feeling, with its myriad although perhaps nondescript surroundings, exists the strongest tie that binds the colonies to the mother country, and these sentiments will prove an everlasting barrier against the cool policy, the careless thought, or the active wickedness, that may at any time strive to loosen the bonds that exist between Britons in Australia and Britons at home.

In rambling about the out-of-the-way parts of Sydney it is impossible but to be struck with the affection with which the people of the colony cling to the memories of the past. Dead and gone governors have monuments erected to them. The chair of Lady Macquarie and the walk called by her name have already been alluded to, so with the statue to Governor Bourke. On the shores of Botany Bay the visit of Leperouse is carefully kept in mind; a monument has been erected upon the spot upon which Captain Cook landed; the names of the streets all, or nearly all, indicate, not merely an English, but a loyally English origin; the names of men long since passed away are to be met with at almost every turning; and English habits and feelings are as much the fashion in Sydney as in London.

The antiquity of Sydney is brought home to the visitor from the neighbouring colonies more strongly perhaps than to those newly-arrived from Europe. South Australians seldom travel, or at any rate their wanderings are confined pretty much within their own borders, or in a few instances to a run "home"—that is, to England—and back again. The same remark applies, in even greater degree, to Tasmanian colonists. Victorians, however, and New Zealanders—that is, the New Zealanders of Dunedin and of the west coast—Queenslanders, from almost every point between Moreton Bay and Car-

pentaria, think no more of running up or down or across to Sydney, than a Liverpool cotton speculator or commercial traveller does of going to New York. To these people, after having lived in one or other of the younger Australian colonies for say ten or fifteen years, the everyday circumstances of the ordinary Sydney native possess many of the elements of "old fashion." Most of them have been in the habit of seeing people put up and take down their houses, or buy or sell them, on the slightest possible pretext, or for a mere fancy. On the gold-fields, at any rate, the men or the families who continue to dwell in the same building for half a score of years are comparatively rare. In Sydney, and indeed in most of the old up-country townships of New South Wales, this state of things does not exist, or only to a very limited extent. In Sydney itself it is quite common for men and women of forty or fifty, some of them with children married and having families growing up around them, to be living in the houses in which they were born, and which, in many cases, were built by the grandfathers of the "honest men and bonnie lassies" who are looked upon as the "young people" of to-day. Such a state of things is common enough in Great Britain, but, save in New South Wales and Tasmania, it is comparatively unknown in Australia, and, as a rule, the new arrival from the other colonies is strongly impressed thereby.

Many of the members of the second and third generations of Sydney natives were born rich, and live in considerable state, some of them in New South Wales and others in England. The feelings and habits, however, that go to make up a native—so far as the native of Australia is concerned—are to be seen chiefly among the middle and lower classes of the people. The shopkeepers, tradesmen, and small farmers exhibit the more salient traits in the strongest light. A sturdy independence—the growth of well-kept and well-provided homes—a strong love of the land in which their ways of life have been cast, a deeply-seated honesty begotten by the possession of ample though moderate means, and a sense of a happy future—all these things work together, and produce the Australian character in its best aspects. That they are working persistently and with good effect is evidenced by the home and family virtues that form the staple of the native Australian people.

The pride of the New South Welshman in the metropolis of the colony, of which he is so proud, has been spoken of. What grounds for the feeling there exist in the natural beauties of the place and the habits of its citizens have, to some extent, been shown. The material prosperity of the city will perhaps best afford the strongest reason for the pardonable pride of the

"Sydney native." The following description of the present condition and appearance of Sydney, compiled in the September of 1870 for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, conveys a perfectly accurate idea of the place:—"Architecturally, Sydney has taken rapid strides within the last ten or fifteen years, and its fine banking-houses, mercantile establishments, and handsome public edifices give it an aspect bespeaking substantial wealth, advanced cultivation, and growing enterprise. The portion convenient to, though not close to, the quays, which as usual in other great seaports is the most frequented, contains many of the best buildings for commercial purposes, the banks and most of the warehouses being constructed of freestone, in the modern style of Italian composite, and displaying in their façades much of the rich ornamentation belonging to the Classic and Gothic types. Most of these are situated in the main thoroughfares, George and Pitt Streets. The larger number of banks are on the west side of George Street, and, together with the extensive blocks of spacious and handsome warehouses in their neighbourhood, give a distinctive character to that section of the city. The most noticeable for their dimensions and architecture are the London Chartered Bank of Australia, the Bank of New South Wales, the Commercial Bank, the English, Scottish Bank, the Australian Joint Stock Bank, and the Bank of Australasia. Those in Pitt Street are the new City Bank, the Oriental Bank, and the Union Bank. Here also is the Exchange, a large stone-built edifice, with columned front, of the Corinthian order. All of these are substantial structures, externally imposing, and within displaying much taste and elegance in fresco decorations and fittings. The offices of the Australian Mutual Provident Society, also in Pitt Street, are equally observable for the beauty of their Italianised Corinthian front, and the general effect of the carved stonework. Other extensive edifices in this locality are the *Sydney Morning Herald* office, a massive building, occupying a prominent site at the junction of three streets; Vickery's Buildings, a splendid pile of stone warehouses, besides a great number of insurance offices and mercantile establishments, ornamental in character, and of important dimensions. But by far the grandest edifice of which Sydney can boast is her University, which is situated at the southern side, a little beyond the city boundary, on an eminence that sets off its fine form to advantage. It is a noble mass of stone, in the style usually denominated Perpendicular English, extending 410 feet in length. Its great hall stands at the western end; its style is of an earlier period than that of the rest of the range. For dimensions, constructive art, and decoration, it is favourably compared by competent judges with West-

minster Hall. The aspect of the great northern front is exceedingly grand. The two affiliated colleges, St. Paul's (Anglican) and St. John's (Roman Catholic), are also extensive stone structures, Gothic in style, and stand within the domain of 150 acres that surrounds the university. The new Post Office, near the centre of the city, is an elaborate piece of work, both as to extent and decoration, and is so far advanced as to show how great an adornment it will eventually prove. It occupies a space between George and Pitt Streets, and is to have a front to each, that facing the first-named thoroughfare being now nearly complete. It will also have a front to a new street on its northern side, the whole frontage extending over 500 feet. The style is Italian, combining the style of the Florentine palaces with the arcaded façades of Venice. One of its most remarkable features is the native granite used in the pillars of the arcade and in the columination of the façades. It is highly polished, of a grey tint, and, without interfering with the harmony of other details, relieves effectually the otherwise uniform colour of the structure. The building throughout is profusely enriched with carved ornament. Another great public edifice now being raised is the Town Hall, the foundation-stone of which was laid by Prince Alfred. The sight is near the present centre of the city, and the elevation renders it conspicuous. The architecture is of the Renaissance period of the Italian, in combination with Venetian details. The clock tower will stand 161 feet high, and the main body of the building have an elevation of 57 feet. The Museum, on the eastern side of the city, is an imposing structure, with a bold Grecian front, whose leading features are strongly marked so as to present deep recesses—a provision well suited to relieve the eye accustomed to the brightness of the Australian day. The principal courts of justice are in King Street and at Darlinghurst. The first-mentioned, where the civil business is transacted, is a large rectangular building of fine brick-work, with arcaded front, decorated with Doric entablature. The court-house at Darlinghurst, for criminal trials, is a fine stone building in pure Doric. In the rear is the great gaol, occupying a large area, and built of stone, with spacious wards radiating from the centre. Of the Government offices, the Treasury, at the eastern extremity of Bridge Street, is the only one having any noteworthy characteristics as a public edifice; and, further than that it is a large, well-proportioned structure of freestone, with rusticated quoins and handsome entablature, nothing need be said. The other government offices in the same street have little in their appearance to make them objects of interest or ornament. The same may be said of the Parliament buildings in Macquarie Street. They are conspicuous as occupying

a large site, but in design they possess no features worthy of attention. As far as the absence of architectural ornament is concerned, the like remarks will apply to other large public buildings in the same street—the Infirmary, the Mint, and the Immigration Depôt. The private residences, however, are of a superior character, and, being in the vicinity of beautiful recreation grounds, it is one of the aristocratic parts of the city. The fashionable quarter, *par excellence*, however (contrary to the case of London), is the east end of the city, and the suburban localities stretching beyond along the shore. Here are most of the splendid mansions, glimpses of which are caught from the harbour, which they overlook. Many of them have been erected at an enormous cost, and for extent, internal grandeur, and magnificent grounds, are not equalled by any private residences on this side of the equator. There are upwards of one hundred and twenty churches and other places of worship in the city and suburbs. Architecturally, the edifices of the English and Roman Churches are the most prominent, although the chief place of worship of the Congregational body in Pitt Street, and those of the Wesleyan Methodists in York Street and at Chippendale, are fine spacious buildings, imposing in structure, and with finely finished interiors. The Anglican Cathedral Church of St. Andrew, in George Street, has occupied many years in erection, and although not thoroughly finished, has been for some time used for public worship. It has a remarkably fine site in the most elevated part of the central district of the city, and therefore appears to advantage. But it is of comparatively small dimensions, being within the walls 160 feet long by 62 feet in breadth. The transept is 110 feet by only 14 feet. It has stained glass windows in the highest form of modern art, nearly all being the gifts of private individuals. Elaborate marble and encaustic tile work covers the floor of the choir and the steps leading thereto. The Roman Catholic community are proceeding with the erection of what is to be a highly decorated and very large Gothic cathedral, near the site of one burnt down a few years ago. This also is in an excellent situation, between the main part of the city and one of its most populous sections. Government House, the official residence of her Majesty's representative, is a splendid building, in the Tudor style, on a slight eminence, near to and overlooking the harbour, and surrounded by gardens and ornamental grounds. Its length is 152 feet, width 82 feet. It was erected at a cost of about £50,000, and is a magnificent establishment."

The same authority says that, attached to the Church of England, there are in Sydney and its suburbs 118 churches and chapels. The congregations

are ministered to by nearly 100 clergymen. The members of the Roman Catholic churches are nearly as well provided for. They possess over 80 churches and 70 clergymen. The various dissenting bodies have large numbers of places of worship, and the whole of them are well attended. Education is quite as well supported as religious instruction, the principal educational establishments being the Primary School ("Public" and "Denominational"), the "Grammar School" of Sydney, and the "King's School" of Paramatta; and, lastly, the Sydney University and its affiliated Colleges—St. Paul's and St. John's. The instruction supplied by the Sydney Grammar School (founded and supported by the State) is chiefly intended for the instruction of the youth of the colony in classics and mathematics, preparatory to the university course. But the standard of the University is high, and there are no collegiate institutions in the colony at all corresponding in their character to Eton or Winchester. The Sydney University was founded on the 18th of October, 1850. It has a magnificent range of buildings on a hill to the South of Sydney. It is governed by a Senate, consisting of nineteen gentlemen, one of whom is the Chancellor and another the Vice-Chancellor. It has five Professors, Boards of Examiners for the Faculties of Law, Art, and Medicine, a Registrar, and other officers. St. Paul's College (of which the Metropolitan Bishop is the Visitor) is governed by a Warden and eighteen Fellows. St. John's College (of which the Roman Catholic Archbishop is the Visitor) is governed by a Rector and eighteen Fellows. A College for the Wesleyan Body, to be called "Wesley College," is projected; and a Presbyterian College (to be affiliated to the Sydney University) has been incorporated by Act 31st Victoria. "St. Andrew's" is to be connected with the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales; the Moderator is to be the Visitor, and it is to be governed by a Principal and Council of twelve.

The primary education of the children of New South Wales is taken in hand by the government of the colony. The working out of the scheme of education is placed in the hands of a Council of Education. There are over 800 schools in active operation. The other educational institutes of the colony are very numerous, and include a public library, to which is attached a school of design and classes for the study of the various branches of knowledge.

From these particulars it will be seen that the seed planted less than a hundred years ago has grown into a mighty forest, the riches of which increase every day and year.

CHAPTER XIII.

NEW SOUTH WALES (*continued*).

THE EXTENT AND BOUNDARIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES.—ITS MOUNTAIN SYSTEM.—THE RIVERS: THEIR COURSES AND THE COUNTRY THEY DRAIN.

THE colony of New South Wales included within its original boundaries an extent of territory nearly half the size of Europe. Land was apportioned out in noble quantities—and after a right royal fashion—in the old days of the new southern world. “When George the Third was King,” very many of the problems of life were worked out by the “rule of thumb,” and so selecting the eastern sea-board of the continent as the boundary, the colony was run backwards as far as the 135th meridian of east longitude. This fixing of the boundaries of the territory was not a bad guess, for eastward of the line drawn inland lies by far the most valuable portions of the explored parts of Australia. New South Wales at its commencement included within its boundary the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria on the north, and of Spencer Gulf at the southern extremity.

Within the last thirty-five years the colony has been shorn of its fair, though somewhat inconvenient, proportions. In 1836 a square block down at the south-western corner, rather more than twice the size of England, was taken for the purpose of forming the colony of South Australia. In this block was included the great south-coast sea, Spencer Gulf. In 1861 another westerly strip was added to South Australia, and two years afterwards an immense block of Northern Australia was joined to the same colony. In 1851 Victoria was abstracted from the parent tree, and in 1859 her northern borders were contracted, by the establishment of the colony of Queensland. Although thus bereft of a portion of its original territory on all sides, save to the east, where the “silver streak” of the Pacific serves the same good purpose as the seas around Great Britain, New South Wales is still a colony of ample size, and of almost inexhaustible resources. There are within its borders over 323,000 square miles of land. Its average length and breadth may be taken at 500 miles, and it is enclosed within the parallels of 28° and 37° south latitude, and 141° and 154° of east longitude.

Within this area there is “ample scope and verge enough” for Nature to display herself in various features, and for man to develop everything of the useful and beautiful, requisite for his nature and desires. The physical

features of the colony present ample variety of all the elements of natural beauty. Mountains and rivers, plains and valleys, rich river banks and sterile mountain ranges, a flora diversified and beautiful as any to be met with in the world, forest trees of mighty size, long stretches of jungle-like scrub, succeed each to the other, in various forms, and altogether constitute a country of exceeding beauty and interest.

In order to arrive at an appreciative understanding of the main features of the colony, the river and mountain systems must be considered. The mountains, naturally enough, first present themselves as being the most prominent and characteristic of these natural features. The mountain system is divided into three, or rather four, sections. First of all the Coast Range, distinguished at various points as the Northern Coast Range, the Illawarra and the Currackbilly Ranges. Mount Coolungera is said to be the highest point of this system of mountains, rising nearly 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. The great Dividing Range, or Chain, as it is more commonly called—the western-running foot of which has been already described under the head of Victoria—traverses the whole length of the colony from north to south. At its northern extremity, taking its name from the district through which it runs, it is called the New England Range. This name it retains as far down as the head-waters of the Manning River. The highest point of this portion of the country, Ben Lomond, is 5,000 feet high. Just where the mighty mass of mountains takes a considerable dip to the westward, it takes the name of the Liverpool Range, having for its highest point Oxley Peak, 4,500 feet high. Mount Wingan, the only active volcano on the Australian continent, stands just below the elbow formed by the first westerly course taken by the range after running south from the borders of the adjoining colony of Queensland.

The Burning Mountain is of course a great source of interest and wonder to the people, and a constant attraction to sightseers. All the year long volumes of smoke issue from the sides and top of the mountain, and the fumes descending make a desert in the midst of a bright and beautiful country. From the geological formation and other indications, it is evident that the mountain is permeated with a seam of coal, in course of slow combustion, and at a considerable distance from the surface. Recent discoveries of shale in various parts of New South Wales have pretty well done away with any doubts that may have existed on this subject; and in the latter part of 1870 a project was started for the purpose of tunnelling into the sides of the mountain, for the purpose of opening up the deposit. The manufacture of

kerosine will, in all probability, be the result of these workings. Fossil woods and agates are found in the neighbourhood of the volcano, and the district is one full of interest to the geologist.

Several important settlements are met with on the main north road from Sydney to Queensland, between the point where Mount Wingan presents so marked a feature in the scenery and Maryland, where the mountains resume the north and south course, broken at the boundary of New South Wales and Queensland. Chief of these are Armidale and Tenterfield. The latter is the most northerly of the towns of New South Wales. From being a mere halting-place on the main road, it has risen into considerable importance within the last few years. The progress it has made is almost entirely due to the discovery of a gold-field in its vicinity. It is surrounded by a wide expanse of table-land admirably adapted for the profitable feeding of sheep and cattle, as is testified to by the fact that some of the squatters of New England are among the richest of the pastoral kings of Australia.

Armidale is a still more important settlement, and is situated in a pleasant pastoral plain, surrounded by a rugged and precipitous country. The mountains in the neighbourhood are well timbered, and in some places, picturesque waterfalls add to the beauty of the scene. The town itself possesses all the features of industry and well-doing, so characteristic of even the most out-of-the-way settlements of Australia. Churches, banks, hotels, and schools there are in plenty. There are two newspapers in the town, several flour-mills, a brewery, a tannery, and the surrounding country is pretty well occupied by farmers and squatters.

From the Liverpool Range almost down to the Goulburn Plains, a considerable distance south of Sydney, the dividing range is called the Blue Mountains, and by this name the Australian Alps is better known than by any other. About midway between the two points named, the mountains divide, and a narrow valley runs between. Other valleys lead into this from the ranges on both sides. In many places the sides of these valleys rise straight up for hundreds of feet, and, almost as a rule, there is only one means of entrance to them. Many of them are very lovely in form and outline. Nearly all of them have bright clear streams running through the centre, and in a few cases families have settled down and cultivated the rich alluvial soil with which the sandstone bed rock is covered. The Blue Mountains are succeeded by the Cullerin, the Gourrok, the Monaro, and the Muniong Ranges, this last having for its highest point Mount Kosciusko, a landmark well known to the "borderers" of New South Wales and Victoria.

"The Barrier Range" consists of a number of detached spurs and ridges lying on the west bank of the River Darling, and for the most part not far from the western boundary of the colony. These are called the Grey and the Stanley Ranges respectively. Little is known of them, though the opening up of the country to the north is making men better acquainted with the district thereabouts every day.

The rivers of New South Wales, with two or three inconsiderable exceptions, take their rise in the Dividing Range. The rivers flowing to the east are few in number, and not very important in character. Chief among them is the Hawkesbury, running a course of over 300 miles, and draining about 9,000 miles of country. The head waters of this river are gathered from three distinct watersheds. Its main feeder, running from the north, is called the Wollondilly. Presently it is joined by the Mulwaree, the Cookbundoon, and the Cox Rivers. Then it takes the name of the Warragamba. "Fairlight Glen" gives a capital idea of the character of the country in this part of New South Wales. The river next receives the waters of the Cow Pasture, and then it is called the Nepean. Under this name it flows on for awhile, when it is joined by the waters of the Grose River, and at this junction the Hawkesbury proper commences. Its after-course is fed by various streams, the waters of the whole being discharged into the Pacific at Broken Bay, twenty miles or so to the north of Port Jackson.

The tributaries of the Hunter River are separated from those of the Hawkesbury by spurs of the Blue Mountains. Its chief sources of supply are derived from the sides and valleys of the Liverpool Range. This river runs through by far the richest agricultural districts of New South Wales; but of these, and the other industrial pursuits connected with it, it will be best to speak when its port—Newcastle—comes to be described.

Besides the Hawkesbury and the Hunter, the chief east-flowing stream of the colony is the Shoalhaven, rising in a swamp, surrounded by granite ranges, and situate nearly 3,000 feet above the level of the sea, and flowing through wild and magnificent scenery, some portions of its course being through deep glens into which man has never penetrated. Scattered around its headwaters are many small gold-fields, the working of which gives occupation to a good number of miners. After receiving fully a dozen tributaries, it discharges into the ocean at Greenwell Point, having run a course of nearly 300 miles. The Clarence, the McLeay, and the Manning Rivers, are all over 100 miles long; whilst about half a dozen streams having their discharge on the east coast run shorter courses.

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The rivers flowing to the westward of the Dividing Range are of a much more important character than those having their outlets on the eastern seaboard. Their length is counted by thousands instead of hundreds of miles, and the country they run through is of a more characteristically Australian character. The Murray has already been described at sufficient length. Although within, or along, the boundaries of the colony its course is shorter than either of the other main streams, it is a more important river than either. It receives the waters of both, together with numerous tributaries with which they are disconnected, and bearing then through South Australia, feeds the Pacific with the mighty volume of water gathered together from the hill-sides that stretch across more than a thousand miles of country.

The River Darling runs a course of considerably over a thousand miles within the boundaries of New South Wales. It takes its rise just on the borders of that colony and Queensland, and for a couple of hundred miles or so its course is somewhat northerly, and therefore within the lines of the latter colony. During its way across a corner of Queensland, however, it can scarcely be called the Darling. Indeed, for the first five hundred miles of its course, it bears the name of the Barwon. Whilst within the borders of Queensland it receives some tolerably important tributaries, including the Dumaresq and the MacIntyre Rivers, the former, however, having a New South Wales origin. After several other large streams have been united to it, including the Booni, Bundarra, Peel, the Castlereagh, the Macquarie, the Warrego, and others, it takes its proper name of the Darling, and retains it until its waters mingle with those of the Murray at Wentworth, just inside the South Australian border. The extent of country drained by the Darling may be understood from the fact that one of its affluents, the Macquarie is 750 miles, the Namoi 600, the Gwydir nearly 500, and the MacIntyre nearly 400 miles long. Some other tributaries are supposed to swell the stream—the Paroo, draining the Albert district, among them—but the information on this subject is not sufficiently definite to be stated as a fact. Every day fresh light is being thrown upon this far-off corner of New South Wales, and ere long the portions of Australia that are now “blanks merely” upon the maps, will become sufficiently well known and appreciated.

Between the Darling and the Lachlan Rivers there spreads a series of vast plains, having an average width of two hundred miles, the westerly parts of which are very scantily watered. It is a strange and almost desolate country. The upper or northerly district, on both sides the river, is called the Warrego. The word sounds as wild as the place it represents. The

population of the district is in the proportion of one man, woman, or child to every forty square miles. Long stretches of poor, sandy soil, with a river-bed here and there taking the shape of deep, and in some instances permanent, water-holes, are its chief characteristics. South of the Warrego, and extending for many miles on the east and west banks of the Bogan River, the district of Wellington spreads. At its northern extremity the country is very lightly settled, nor is there much probability of its ever being densely populated. The town of Wellington is far away to the south, and is the centre of a very beautiful district. The Wellington caves have always had a large amount of interest attached to them, not only on account of their natural beauty and peculiarity, but because of the strange remains of a bygone time that every exploration of their depths brings to light. Remains of men have been found there, and strange tools and weapons; grotesque drawings, indicating a poetic conception and stirring times, tell of a people who have passed away as entirely as has the time in which they lived. Save the deeply-graven lines on the face of the rock, the strange and petrified forms of tools and utensils for household use, the footprints of ages ago, firmly fixed in a clay that has long since turned into rock, no record remains of the people or the period, when the Wellington Caves were places of common resort, either for purposes of security or comfort. Not far from Wellington a shepherd named McDougal discovered the gold that gave the first impetus to what has been for many years one of the chief sources of wealth to the colony. There are several towns of importance in the district, and the scenery is, in many places, of a very beautiful character.

Leaving the rivers to wend their melancholy way through and across the vast plains that stretch to the north and west, there lies to the south and east a country of considerable extent. Agricultural settlement is plentiful hereabouts, whilst the gold-fields in the vicinity afford to the smaller farmers opportunities of filling up their spare time profitably.

To the north of Wellington there is the Cudgegong, with its gold-bearing tributaries, and to the south and east the gold-fields of Tambaroora, and about fifty miles farther south still, Bathurst, the most important town of the inland parts of New South Wales. Between these two points, however, there are several important districts, their importance being chiefly derived from the gold-fields by which they are surrounded. Of late years agriculture has added other elements of prosperity; but the discovery of gold may fairly claim the credit of being the original cause of good to the country. Sofala, on the Turon River, claims first place among the mining townships of

the district. The country round about is of a rugged and mountainous description.

Almost due south from Wellington are the Canobolas, a group of lofty mountains, from which several important water-courses take their rise. The highest peak of the range is said to be nearly 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. The country is rich in mineral wealth, and copper mines have been worked with considerable profit and success. Ophir, where the first systematic prospecting for the discovery of gold was rewarded with success, lies to the north of the Canobolas. Some miles nearer the mountains is the now important township of Orange. This town is surrounded by the finest agricultural district in the colony, and this, together with the mineral riches of the district, would seem to indicate a prosperous future in store for it. Bathurst is to the south-east of Orange; but lengthened reference to it will be more appropriate when the lines of communication between the coast and the inland districts are described.

The Lachlan is the next great river to the south. In common with all the rivers rising west of the mountains, its course is chiefly to the westward. Its head-waters flow through a wild and rugged country; but the greater portion of its course of seven hundred miles is along level plains. In some places the land on the banks of the river, and, indeed, of the country beyond, is absolutely worthless; but the district through which it flows is, on the whole, well adapted for pastoral purposes. Of late years squatting, or sheep-farming operations, have been carried on upon a very extensive scale—not always profitably, however. Very large sums of money have been expended in making dams and sinking wells, and for scores of miles these works are the only vestiges of civilisation to be met with. Towards the lower end of the river the country is subject to inundation. Some attempts at cultivation have been made, but without much success. There are several towns on and near the river, but none of them of any importance. A strange mixture of native and European names is observable in looking through a list of these places. There is, for instance, Forbes, the chief town of the district, and having a population of 5,000 or thereabouts; Dalton, Cowra, Wangan, Caradjery, Condobolin, Murrin, Booligal, Tegorohoke, Oxley, and Towpruck. The names of the tributary streams will serve to illustrate this still further. Among them are to be found the Belubula, the Abercrombie, the Crookwell, and the Boorowa. These are dignified by being called rivers. The first named is fully worthy of the designation. It rises in a hilly country bounding a gold-bearing table-land of considerable value, the townships of

Blayney, Carcoar, and Canowindra being on its banks. It receives numerous tributary creeks, and at nearly all the junctions of these with the river, agricultural settlement is to be met with, and all the settlers are prosperous and contented. The Abercrombie, although it has nearly as long a course—about one hundred miles—is not so important a river as the Belubula. It has one characteristic, however, of which the latter cannot boast. Its waters are perfectly clear, even in times of flood, and it is a thoroughly pleasant river to look upon and stand by. The Boorowa, although not so important a stream as either of the other two, is far more beautiful. Near the town to which the river gives a name, there is a country that would do a South-downman's heart good to look upon. The Boorowa plains are rich in all the most nutritive natural grasses of Australia, and they have been widely utilised by a hard-working and shrewd people. Nor is the district destitute of natural beauty of a picturesque and pleasing character. Not far from the town of Boorowa there is a lovely lake; its waters abound with wild fowl, and its banks are of rare beauty. The river encloses the town almost as perfectly as a ring-fence would do, and on every side the prospect is as pleasing as man could desire. The Canobolas—large and small—two hills lying close to the town, are of exceeding interest, indications of violent volcanic action being plentifully cast about, whilst the flora of the hills and vales afford rare treats to the botanist, and the ordinary lover of nature finds objects to attract his attention and excite his interest in every direction.

Besides these rivers, the Lachlan is fed by numerous creeks, a list of the principal of which is given for the sake of illustrating still further the strange jumble of sounds produced by the mixture of aboriginal and imported names. The chief tributaries under the name of creeks are the Cullerin, Kildare, Oolong, Jerrawa, Old Man's, Blakeney's, Mulgowrie, Grubbin-Cullin, Glengarry, Kangaroooby, Goobang, Branah, Wangoola, Milburn, Ooma, Kalin-gabungagay, Wilandra, Billabong, Gonowlia, and Spring Creeks.

The next river to the south, the Murrumbidgee, is far and away the king river of New South Wales. It has a shorter course than the Darling, but flows through a country of infinitely more value and beauty. In these respects it is equalled only by the Murray; but then the latter is a border and not a purely "Sydney-side" river. It belongs equally to Victoria and New South Wales, that is to say until, after crossing the borders of both colonies, it becomes purely South Australian. The Murrumbidgee is, however, to New South Wales what the Prussians have made the Rhine to Germany, a river flowing through, and not merely by, the country. The people look upon it

to be a part and parcel of themselves, and of the colony in which their homes have been made, and they love and hold it in high esteem accordingly. Whenever the boundaries of New South Wales and Victoria are defined by the waters of the Murrumbidgee, instead of those of the Murray, and when Riverina becomes part of Victoria, the mother colony will have lost what is by far the most pleasant portions of the country lying westward of the Dividing Range.

Although, after several unsuccessful attempts, the gorges of the Blue Mountains had been passed through and the Bathurst district partially settled upon several years before, it was not until the latter part of 1824 that the waters of the Murrumbidgee were crossed by white men. Messrs. Hume and Hovill, the first "overlanders" who travelled from the "Sydney side" to the waters of Port Phillip, were the discoverers of the Murrumbidgee, and the record of their adventures is the first memorial the world received of the interior of Australia. One of the explorers, Hume, had already taken up a station on the extreme limits of the already discovered country, but had no idea of the existence of such a stream as the Murrumbidgee. When he and his companion struck the river it was running "bank-high" at the rate of six miles an hour, and had a breadth of about a hundred and fifty feet. The first crossing of the stream was a work of no small difficulty. Indeed, the attempt was not made until the party had waited for several days, hoping that the flood-waters would subside. After an unsuccessful attempt to make a raft out of the heavy, hard timber growing on the banks of the river, the bushman-like resources of Hume came to the aid of the party, and a capital boat was constructed out of one of the drays. Reaching the lower bank of the river brought them by no means to the end of their troubles. The rough and mountainous country into which they had penetrated was ill adapted for travelling over, and all the carts and a large quantity of their stores had to be left behind. When thus lightened their progress was a slow and tedious one. In several instances they had to lower their horses and cattle down steep precipices, the tracks along the edges of which were anything but safe lines of travel. The party found many causes of encouragement in the course of their journey, nevertheless. Many pleasant streams were crossed, fertile valleys in abundance traversed, rich pasture-lands and gently-rising hills promised a future of prosperity, the extent of which the pioneers had very small conception of. That they reached the Murray, crossed Victoria—naming it Australia Felix—then discovered the settlement from Tasmania on the shores of Portland Bay, has already been told. Other explorers soon

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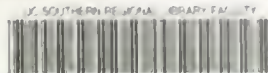
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